Rota Mayor's Office, SMEC named LibDay Parade best floats. PAGE 2
US Labor approves CNMI 2024 Prevailing Wage Report. PAGE 5

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Saipan Tribune

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Jimenez appointed archbishop of Agana

By RACQUEL H. FLOYD
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CORRESPONDENT

Pope Francis has appointed Bishop Ryan P. Jimenez of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa as the new archbishop of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Agaña, Guam. The appointment was officially published last July 6.

See JIMENEZ on Page 4

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Archbishop-elect Ryan Jimenez with Pope Francis during a recent meeting in the Vatican City. Jimenez has been appointed the new archbishop of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Agaña, Guam.

RACQUEL FLOYD

Archbishop-elect Ryan Jimenez is congratulated by Gov. Arnold I. Palacios after his appointment as the new archbishop of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Agaña, Guam during the 5th Joint Memorial Service yesterday at Aqua Resort Club.

Hong Kong Airlines to downsize planes

KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

Hong Kong Airlines' A330 aircraft that can carry up to 292 passengers as it arrives at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport last April.

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Hong Kong Airlines, currently the CNMI's only carrier servicing a the China-Saipan route, is expected to downsize the aircraft its currently using, according to the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

CPA executive director Leo Tudela said from an

See PLANES on Page 4

IPI, committee of creditors aim to sell IPI hotel by year's end

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC and a committee of its creditors have informed the NMI bankruptcy court that the goal is to sell the unfinished IPI hotel by the end of this year.

Last Friday, IPI attorneys

See IPI on Page 4

LibDay festivities end with a bang

CHRYSTAL MARINO

The 2024 Liberation Day grounds at the Garapan Fishing Base was packed with hundreds of spectators for the 4th of July fireworks display.

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

After the parade that morning, hundreds of community members and tourists packed the Liberation Day grounds at the Garapan Fishing Base last Thursday evening, July 4.

With individuals and families gathered to enjoy the fair grounds' food, games, and entertainment, the main draw that evening was the fireworks

See LIBDAY on Page 4

INSIDE

NATION

To a defiant President Joe Biden, the 2024 election is up to the public–not the Democrats on Capitol Hill.

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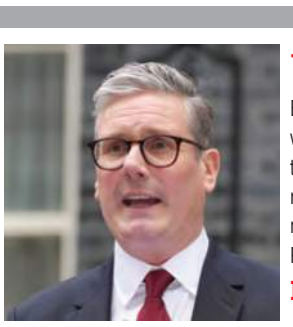

WORLD

Britain's new prime minister, Keir Starmer, vowed Friday to reverse the hopelessness that grew over 14 years of Conservative rule and said he would lead an urgent mission of national renewal after his Labour Party's landslide victory.

PAGE 10

LIFE & STYLE

Actor Dustin Hoffman and Super Bowl winner Patrick Mahomes were among the celebrities watching Carlos Alcaraz play Frances Tiafoe on Friday in the third round on Centre Court at Wimbledon.

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CHRYSTAL MARINO

Staff of the Rota Mayor's Office smile with Saipan Mayor Ramon Blas "RB" Camacho and 2024 Liberation Day Parade Committee chair Priscilla Iakopo after being awarded the prize for best float in the government category Thursday evening at the Garapan Fishing Base.

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Members of the Saipan Maga'Lahi Eagles Club smile with Saipan Mayor Ramon Blas "RB" Camacho and 2024 Liberation Day Parade Committee Chair Priscilla Iakopo after being awarded the prize for best float in the non-profit category Thursday evening at the Garapan Fishing Base.

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Local

Rota Mayor's Office, SMEC named LibDay Parade best floats

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

Showcasing the beauty of the CNMI, its culture, and the history of the islands, the Rota Mayor's Office and the Fraternal Order of Eagles Saipan Maga'Lahi Eagles Club were named the best floats in the 2024 Liberation Day Parade last Thursday night.

The Rota Mayor's Office took home the $5,000 top prize in the government catergory and the Saipan Maga'Lahi Eagles Club also won $5,000 in the non-profit category. Other competitors in the non-profit category were the Carabao Cart, Highlands Lawn Care, CAB Dancers, and Petlas Marianas, and the other government competitor was the Office of Aging- Saipan, Tinian, Rota.

A special awarding ceremony took place Thursday night at the carnival grounds at the Garapan Fishing Base a little before the fireworks show.

Saipan Tribune was able to speak to Saipan Maga'Lahi Eagles Club president Moises Tagle Jr. and he shared his gratitude to organizers and judges of the float competition.

"First we thank God. Second, we wholeheartedly appreciate the judges and the spectators to award the best floats in the non-profit category. It is overwhelming as the president of Saipan Maga'Lahi Eagles Club to receive this kind of award most specially in this momentous event of the year not only here on Saipan, but in the entire U.S. territory."

He shared that the 12- by 8-foot float which depicted scenes from the CNMI's past and present had been a group effort. From the recreation of the Last Command Post to the transition to the present day CNMI and the beauty and opportunities found in it, it had been a labor of love.

"I attribute this award to the entire club, most especially the backbone of our float, Changming Market Warehouse of kuya Dennis Cortez, that served as a shelter where the brainstorming of the design, doing the layout, and execution, and also the highboy of kuya Cris Rivera where it was 'vandalized' by the club to come up with the creativity on everyone's suggestion and comments."

Following the theme of this year's Liberation Festivities, the Rota Mayor's Office float depicted a World War II plane flying from an island, beautifully decorated with a mix of natural greenery, coconut leaves, flame trees, bird of paradise flowers, amazingly detailed latte stones, and an image of a local man representing Rota's indigenous people, symbolizing a resilient community. The plants and builds that created the eye-catching float were all flown in from Rota, and made the float take the spotlight in the government category.

Rota Mayor Aubry Hocog shared with *Saipan Tribune* her thoughts on the win.

"It is such a great feeling to have your hard work pay off. The credit for our win belongs to our hardworking staff for their incredible ability to put the float together in such a short amount of time. Many of the items on our float were made and brought in from Rota. Our team had less than two days to put the float together."

She then expressed her gratitude to everyone on the project and several individuals who played key roles in making the win possible.

"Our win would not be possible without the help of captain Cecilio Raiuki-ulipiy who transported our items to Saipan from Rota, Rene Batallones of United Equipment Rental who donated his boom truck, Mr. and Mrs. Roman and Frances Reyes for allowing us to use their property to prepare our float. We would also like to thank Mayor RB and his amazing team for putting together such a great event as well as generously helping our team by providing us to use their van. We would also like to thank the Marianas Visitors Authority for providing room accommodations for our team while on Saipan."

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LEVELING UP THE CNMI

KIMBERLYN KING-HINDS: A PLATFORM FOR U.S. DELEGATE

Leveling up in the CNMI signifies not just personal growth, but also collective advancement. It's about elevating our communities, enriching our culture, and empowering our people to reach new heights together. In the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, leveling up is our commitment to building a brighter future for all. This means creating opportunities for economic prosperity, enhancing educational outcomes, improving healthcare access, and ensuring that our unique cultural heritage is preserved and celebrated. Leveling up is about making sure that every resident of the CNMI can thrive in an environment that supports their ambitions and fosters a sense of unity and shared purpose. This platform aims to outline the topics and policy areas that I seek to address in my first term as your delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives. Together, we can achieve a stronger, more resilient, and more prosperous CNMI.

IMMIGRATION

The federal mandate to transition our immigration system has eroded self-government, imposing unrealistic expectations on the CNMI without adequate federal resources or support. This uncertainty has already stunted our development and affected investment decisions, creating a cloud of doubt about our future workforce and economic viability.

My key goals in immigration focus on establishing a permanent and sensible program that allows businesses and the economy in the CNMI to access foreign workers to meet labor demands unmet by the local workforce. I aim to expand long-term residency status for more foreign workers who have committed their lives to the advancement of the CNMI. Additionally, I seek to simplify and streamline the processes for welcoming international visitors from source markets that will benefit the CNMI's tourism-based economy. Coordination between local and federal processes is essential to reduce and eventually end birth tourism. Enhancing federal enforcement of immigration violations is also a priority.

To achieve these goals, I propose eliminating the termination date of the current transition program and replacing it with a permanent visa category for the Marianas Region. This program would restructure permit allotments to not exceed 15,000, with mechanisms to adjust this number as needed to meet local workforce and economic needs. Local processing of Temporary Labor Certifications will be secured, along with building local capacity for U.S. workforce development. The criteria for long-term worker classification will be broadened, and a pathway for CNMI-residency status for long-term foreign workers will be created. I will engage in concentrated conversations with the Department of Homeland Security to include more countries, such as the Philippines, in the Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver Program. Additionally, stakeholder meetings with airlines, hospitals, healthcare providers, and federal agencies will help develop a system to disincentivize travel to the CNMI for birth tourism. Increased federal enforcement presence and streamlined deportation processes for undocumented individuals who have committed crimes will further strengthen our immigration system.

EDUCATION

Educational attainment levels in the CNMI do not meet national standards, and our institutions lack the funding and infrastructure to support teachers, staff, and students adequately. There is also a need for a curriculum that reflects our unique cultural heritage while preparing students for the future.

My key goals for education include raising educational attainment levels in primary and secondary public institutions to meet or exceed national measurements. I aim to develop the Northern Marianas College (NMC) into an R1 research university and increase funding to support teachers and support staff directly interacting with students. Additionally, I seek increased infrastructure funding to advance the capabilities of our public schools. To achieve these goals, I will advocate for Seagrant status for NMC, enhancing its research capabilities and access to federal funding for marine and environmental sciences. I will pursue the inclusion of NMC in federal research grant programs offered by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Partnerships with mainland universities will facilitate student and faculty exchanges, joint research projects, and access to advanced educational resources. Furthermore, securing federal grants and loans for the construction, renovation, and modernization of school facilities, including classrooms, laboratories, and technology centers, will ensure students have access to modern learning environments. I will also pursue federal grants for acquiring modern educational technology and implement programs to ensure all students have access to high-speed internet and digital learning resources.

Additionally, I will collaborate with local educators and cultural experts to develop a curriculum that reflects the unique cultural heritage of the CNMI while coordinating with federal educational officials to incorporate cultural education into the CNMI's metrics toward meeting national educational standards. This includes developing educational materials and programs that incorporate the history, language, and traditions of the CNMI. And we must start the life of education as soon as possible, with Early childhood education being a priority. To this I will work to secure federal funding for the expansion of Head Start and Early Head Start programs in the CNMI so that all our children will be ready for a life of learning, growth and success.

MILITARY DEVELOPMENT

The CNMI has faced unique challenges due to federal policies that do not align with the region's specific needs, resulting in economic and infrastructural vulnerabilities. As the United States continues to realign its military forces in the Pacific, it is essential to address these gaps to ensure both regional security and economic self-sufficiency.

My goal is to integrate military development within the CNMI into a framework that supports national security while promoting local economic growth. By ensuring that military initiatives align with the CNMI's economic and infrastructural needs, we can create a more secure and prosperous region.

To achieve these goals, I will advocate for the establishment of permanent military installations in the CNMI, ensuring they align with the Covenant and Technical Agreement. This includes securing federal funding and support for these installations to enhance regional security and create local job opportunities. I will push for a more collaborative approach between local and federal governments to address the unique challenges of the CNMI, such as labor shortages, shipping access, and infrastructure development.

ECONOMY

Federal policies have historically posed significant threats to the CNMI's economy, impacting our ability to sustain ourselves more than natural disasters, global pandemics, and geopolitical conflicts. The people of the CNMI are suffering and the lack of security throughout our economy impacts the everyday lives of our people and the mental health of our community. The lack of a cohesive federal and local policy on CNMI development leaves our community vulnerable to decisions made by individuals unfamiliar with our unique challenges.

My economic strategy involves coordinating a realistic and achievable plan for the CNMI as a U.S. Territory and effectively communicating this plan to Congress. I aim to combat federal interference in CNMI economic growth and target federal resources and programs to address long-standing economic challenges. This includes increasing the tools and resources to truly realize the dream of self-government, as well as improving transportation access and affordability to connect our people with the world and the world with our people.

Policies to achieve this include coordinating within Congressional Committees and Federal Agencies on short-term policy and developmental objectives for the CNMI, institutionalizing these objectives into the federal budget process and statutes, and coordinating with territorial offices on a unified position on territorial development. I will utilize the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and AAPI Caucus to advance unified territorial policy. We must advocate for a specific policy for the territories that comes hand-in-hand with the resources and programs to make growth in our islands a reality. This includes pursuing statutory amendments to assemble federal resources for the CNMI into block grants where appropriate, amending the Essential Air Service statute to include airports in the CNMI, pursuing the necessary and common-sense exemption to U.S. cabotage policy, and providing federal resources to establish and subsidize inter-island ferry service.

I will work to ensure that federal policies are adapted to the specific needs of the CNMI, reducing the economic burden imposed by one-size-fits-all regulations. This includes advocating for policy changes that recognize the strategic importance of the CNMI in the Pacific and ensuring that local voices are heard in federal decision-making processes. By fostering a strong partnership between the CNMI and the federal government, we can build a resilient economy that supports both local and national interests.

HEALTHCARE

The CNMI faces significant health challenges, including high rates of noncommunicable diseases, methamphetamine addiction, domestic violence, and sexual abuse, coupled with inadequate federal support for Medicaid and healthcare infrastructure. These issues are exacerbated by higher rates of uninsured populations, poverty, and non-communicable diseases, leaving our community underserved and in need of greater resources.

My health strategy aims to secure federal recognition of substance abuse challenges in the CNMI and raise awareness and resources to support services for survivors of domestic violence and sexual abuse. I seek parity with the states in the funding and treatment of CNMI Medicaid benefits and advocate for increased funding and on-island resources for medical treatment of veterans. Sustainable solutions to offset rising costs of operating the CNMI hospital are also a priority.

Policies to achieve these goals include pursuing greater federal resources to address long-standing issues related to methamphetamine addiction, securing more resources for domestic violence and sexual abuse victim services, and making the formula distribution of the Federal Medicaid Cost share permanent. I will work to remove the Medicaid cap permanently, restart presumptive eligibility for Medicaid enrollees, and target infrastructure funding to support CHCC hospital development, upgrades, and electricity systems.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The CNMI workforce faces immense pressure, with federal expectations to perform beyond their capacity without adequate support or resources. Workers are expected to carry heavy loads, sacrificing personal time and well-being to sustain the economy. Additionally, the lack of local enforcement of federal labor laws leaves our workforce vulnerable and unsupported.
My workforce development strategy is centered on securing greater funding to support workforce development initiatives and obtaining more data on the CNMI's workforce. Increased technical assistance for the CNMI government on workforce development is also essential.

We must pursue implementing specific funding objectives and pathways separate from DOI TAP Grants to fulfill the goals of 48 U.S.C. 1807 Technical Assistance. I will secure funding for a comprehensive study of the CNMI's workforce capacity and develop a long-range plan for workforce development funded through CW worker education fees. Coordination and legislation to produce timely, accurate, and detailed workforce and immigration statistics will allow the CNMI to establish an adequate plan for the training and development of U.S. Workers. I will also secure funding for the extension of U.S. Department of Labor enforcement to the CNMI Department of Labor.

The CNMI stands at a pivotal moment. Leveling up is about more than just individual success; it's about our collective rise, ensuring that every member of our community can thrive. By addressing critical issues in immigration, workforce development, education, the economy, health, and military development, we can build a future where the CNMI not only meets national standards but sets new ones ourselves.

As your delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives, I am committed to advocating for policies that will create a sustainable, prosperous, and resilient CNMI. Together, we can secure the resources, support, and recognition we need from the federal government to enhance our quality of life, protect our unique cultural heritage, and ensure our economic independence.

By fostering a strong partnership between the CNMI and the federal government, we can overcome the challenges that have held us back time and time again. Let's work together to create a brighter future where the CNMI is recognized for its strategic importance, cultural richness, and economic potential, and one where we cast aside the one-size-fits-all mentality that has stifled the unique beauty of who we are as a people. With your support, we will level up the CNMI, achieving new heights!

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PAID FOR BY THE COMMITTEE TO ELECT KIMBERLYN KING-HINDS FOR U.S. CONGRESS

NMC: $7.3K in federal financial aid available

Qualified Northern Marianas College students who are looking to access financial aid can receive up to $7,365 in Pell grants for NMC's 2024-2025 Academic Year if they submit the 2024-2025 Free Application for Federal Financial Aid and the supporting documents before the priority deadline of Aug. 15, 2024.

The Federal Financial Aid program is administered by the U.S. Department of Education. Through the program's various types of grants, loans, and scholarships, the Federal Financial Aid program is the largest financial aid provider in the U.S.

Students can submit a FAFSA by logging on to fafsa.gov. The necessary supporting documents can be found at marianas.edu/fao. NMC's school code is 015746.

To verify eligibility for Pell Grants, applicants can contact the NMC Financial Aid Office through email at fao@marianas.edu or call 237-6791/2/3/4. Applicants can also stop by the Financial Aid Office from 9am to 3pm, from Monday to Thursday.

NMC offers several degree and certificate programs, including a Bachelor of Science in Education (Concentration in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Rehabilitation and Human Services, or Special Education), Bachelor of Science in Business Management (Concentration in Accounting or without Concentration); Associates of Arts in Business, Associates of Applied Science in Business Administration (Emphasis in Accounting, Business Management, or Computer Applications), Associates of Applied Science in Hospitality Management, Associates of Arts in Liberal Arts (Emphasis in Education, Health and Physical Education, Pre-Engineering, Social Work, or without Emphasis), Associates of Science in Nursing, Associates of Science in Agriculture, Associates of Science in Natural Resource Management, Associates of Applied Science in Criminal Justice, and Associates of Science in Fire Science Technology. The certificate programs at NMC include Basic Law Enforcement, Business Management, Computer Applications, Early Childhood Education, Fire Science Technology, Hospitality Operations, Nursing Assistant, and Small Business Management.

The 2024 Fall semester for NMC begins on Aug. 19, 2024. The admissions deadline for new students is on Aug. 9, 2024. For additional information or inquiries, contact the Office of Admissions and Records at (670) 237-6769/70/71/72 or email oar@marianas.edu. ***(PR)***

JIMENEZ

From page 1

The archbishop-elect said he has mixed feelings after learning of his new appointment.

"You know, our lives as priests as bishops, we go where God sends us and so that capacity to kind of just be open and not cling on and it's difficult because we're human beings as well. We get attached to people with friends and I considered a lot of people as family, so it's mixed but I also feel a deep sense of peace, in the sense that I'm not really in charge, God is I just have to be able to allow him to take control and be able to respond freely, what would this mean, what would be the things that I need to do and take it one day at a time," he said after the 5th Joint Memorial Service yesterday at Aqua Resort Club.

He said he will miss a lot of things on Saipan. "The people, the food, Mañagaha. My kind of like stress reliever, is just go to Mañagaha. I love snorkeling. I used to bike. I didn't have much time [to bike recently], but I will surely miss the beauty of the island," he said.

His message to the Catholic faithful of Saipan now that he will be relocating 131 miles south to Guam, "Gratitude and know that while we wait for whoever would be the next bishop of Chalan Kanoa, that God will not abandon us. God continues to take care of us and we have to have that faith."

Jimenez also confirmed that with his appointment as archbishop of the archdiocese of Agaña, Guam, the bishop position at the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa will be vacant.

"So right now, technically I am still in charge of Chalan Kanoa, but no longer as we call it the bishop of Chalan Kanoa, but as the diocesan administrator until Aug. 15. When that happens, that means Chalan Kanoa, CNMI will become vacant. Now, two things will happen. Rome may appoint before the 15th of August, if it's an apostolic administrator the Holy Father will appoint someone to administer. If not, we elect from among the priests who would temporarily be the administrator, while that is going on the process of consultation as to who would be the next bishop and all of that may take place. It's a process and sometimes it can be a long process."

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

LIBDAY

From page 1

show which concluded the nearly monthlong Liberation Day festivities.

The fireworks, which was setup at the fishing base dock, were finally lit at 9:30pm after all the lights went off at the fairgrounds and a 10-minute firework show proceeded to paint the sky.

Families from across the island gathered for the spectacle and for several community members, they had come to make memories with their kids.

"It was nice to see fireworks again even if it was only a few minutes," said Dan Dan resident Christian Gelacio.

Alayssa Mondido, who had come from Koblerville with her siblings said, "It was short and simple, but still a nice show for the community to come together and watch."

Kagman resident and mother of one Michelle Somol shared. "It was a good fireworks show. I'm glad that they brought it out again this year. It's something that the community looks forward to."

According to 2024 Liberation Day Committee parade chair and Saipan Mayor Ramon Blas "RB" Camacho's chief of staff Priscilla Iakopo, the fireworks had cost $7,000 and had been a donation from one of their sponsors.

"The fireworks were donated by our sponsors who gave us the monetary cash to put on a 10-minute fireworks show for the community and our visitors as well."

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

PLANES

From page 1

A330 aircraft that can carry up to 292 passengers, Hong Kong Airlines is expected to downsize its plane to one similar to the B737 aircraft Jeju Air currently uses with a seat capacity of 189 passengers per flight.

"Hong Kong Airlines will be switching from its [larger] airbus to a smaller aircraft almost the same size as Jeju Air's plane," he said.

Saipan Tribune learned the downsize in aircraft could be to pay lower airport fees as CPA currently works on reducing its fees for its current airline partners.

Currently, Hong Kong Airlines is committed to providing two flights per week from Hong Kong to Saipan.

However, back in May, Tudela approved Hong Kong Airlines' request for permission to land additional flights at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport.

The extra flights are tentatively scheduled to arrive Wednesdays from July 17 to Aug. 21, 2024.

In his approval notice to Hong Kong Airlines, Tudela said the additional flights will be included in CPA's monthly flight schedule starting July 2024.

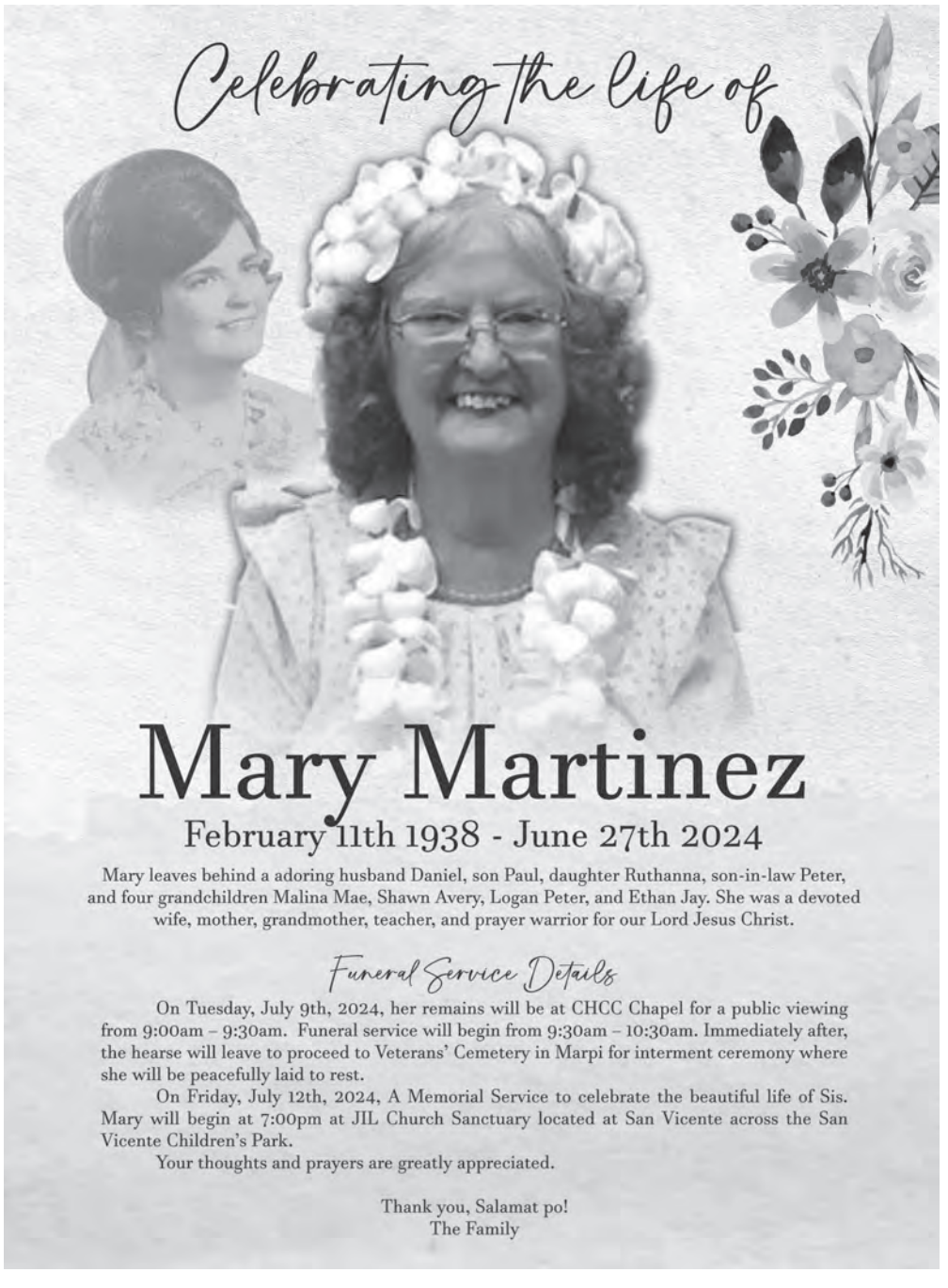
Last April, the CNMI witnessed the monumental return of Hong Kong Airlines after a five-year hiatus.

During its inaugural flight, Hong Kong Airlines brought in 292 passengers from Hong Kong.

The most significant part of the inaugural flight was that Hong Kong Airlines chair Jianfeng Jeff Sun himself captained the flight.

In a media briefing after the flight landed at the airport, Jianfeng shared that due to the success of the first flight (which was at full capacity) and due to the demand, discussions had already begun to add additional flights from Hong Kong to Saipan.

Saipan Tribune learned that over 200 seats per flight have already been secured by travel agencies for the next year.


Celebrating the life of
Mary Martinez
February 11th 1938 - June 27th 2024
Mary leaves behind a adoring husband Daniel, son Paul, daughter Ruthanna, son-in-law Peter, and four grandchildren Malina Mae, Shawn Avery, Logan Peter, and Ethan Jay. She was a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, teacher, and prayer warrior for our Lord Jesus Christ.
Funeral Service Details
On Tuesday, July 9th, 2024, her remains will be at CHCC Chapel for a public viewing from 9:00am – 9:30am. Funeral service will begin from 9:30am – 10:30am. Immediately after, the hearse will leave to proceed to Veterans' Cemetery in Marpi for interment ceremony where she will be peacefully laid to rest.
On Friday, July 12th, 2024, A Memorial Service to celebrate the beautiful life of Sis. Mary will begin at 7:00pm at JIL Church Sanctuary located at San Vicente across the San Vicente Children's Park.
Your thoughts and prayers are greatly appreciated.
Thank you, Salamat po!
The Family

IPI

From page 1

filed a motion in opposition of the CNMI's motion to convert IPI's Chapter 11 Bankruptcy to a Chapter 7 Bankruptcy (which would essentially order liquidation of all IPI's assets).

"IPI opposes the motion to convert case to Chapter 7 by the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands," said the motion.

In its 34-page motion in opposition, IPI's attorneys informed the court that IPI and a committee of its creditors have embarked on a process to sell the unfinished hotel casino with a goal to sell the hotel by the end of the year.

"Although this case was filed just two and half months ago, [IPI] and [the] committee have agreed to embark on a '363 sale process' as the most efficient means of monetizing the hotel for the benefit of creditors. The debtor and committee have interviewed one potential investment banker/real estate brokerage. The debtor and committee anticipate the filing of a motion to approve a 'stalking horse' bid (subject to overbids) with the goal of selling the hotel by year end and filing a liquidating plan to pay creditors in their order of priority," said IPI.

IPI's lawyers argue that a Chapter 7 liquidation of its estate would be against the creditors' best interests.

First, IPI's lawyer states, liquidations always tend to be costlier and more time-consuming. Second, a Chapter 7 Trustee often does not have access to funds to properly maintain and secure an asset. Third, given the poor condition of the building and lack of funds to pay for security, a Chapter 7 Trustee could simply abandon the asset.

"Accordingly, conversion of this Chapter 11 case to a Chapter 7 case is not in the best interest of creditors and the estate. To the contrary, it is in the best interests of creditors to permit the debtor to swiftly move forward with a sale of the assets free and clear of liens, including tax liens and UCC-financing statements. Unsecured creditors who did not hire counsel (and have not appeared) should share in an equitable distribution," said the motion.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

US Labor approves CNMI 2024 Prevailing Wage Report

The U.S. Department of Labor has approved the CNMI's 2024 Prevailing Wage Study Report for the CW-1 visa program. Effective from July 1, 2024, until June 30, 2025, the new wages will be implemented for CW-1 determinations.

A total of 848 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Detailed Titles are found in the U.S. economy-502 Detailed Titles were captured by the CNMI 2024 PWS. The U.S. Department of Labor reviewed and approved 432 for use in the 2024 PWS wage data based on the CNMI's 2024 PWS survey, 31 are assigned the Guam OEWS wage values, and 385 are assigned the Adjusted OEWS wage values according to the letter from the Office of Foreign Labor Certification Administrator.

Remedio C. Mafnas, the acting secretary of the CNMI Department of Commerce, extended her gratitude to the businesses that participated in the 2024 PWS.

She stated, "We deeply appreciate your time and efforts in providing the essential data needed for this report." Acting secretary Mafnas also expressed her sincere thanks to the Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs for technical assistance funds, which made this annual survey possible.

The 2024 PWS CW-1 Wage Table report can be accessed on the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Foreign Labor Certification website at https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/foreign-labor/.

The 2024 PWS Report can be accessed on the CNMI Department of Commerce, Central Statistics Division website at https://ver1.cnmicommerce.com/divisions/central-statistics/report-hub/.

Questions and inquiries regarding the prevailing wage study survey should be directed to the Central Statistics Division at telephone number (670) 664-3023 or email address director.csd@commerce.gov.mp. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building
P.O. Box 501220 CK • Saipan, MP 96950-1220
Tel: (670) 664-4282 • Facsimile: (670) 235-5131

WATER QUALITY REPORT NOW AVAILABLE

Your 2023 CUC Water Quality Report is now available on-line! This year, we have a separate report for each island: Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. These reports contain important information about the source and quality of your drinking water.

Please open the following web sites to view what contaminants were detected in your water during 2023 and to learn more about your drinking water.

For Saipan, go to https://www.cucgov.org/spn2023
For Tinian, go to https://www.cucgov.org/tin2023
For Rota, go to https://www.cucgov.org/rota2023

If you need the report translated, wish to speak with someone about the report, or would like a paper copy delivered or e-mailed to you, please call CUC at (670) 664-4282.

RA AYOORA REPOODIL AMMWELIL SCHAAL

Repoodil yóómw 2023 CUC Ammwelil Schaal aa yoor online! Ráágh yeel, ai ayoora repoodngáli falúw kka: Seipél, Tchiliyól, me Luuta. E lo llól repood kkal arongorong ikka e impotanti reel milikka e toowow me ammwelil schaal iye ów ghal úlúmi.

Emmwel ubwe suughi website ikka e amwirimwiritiw ubwe amwuri meta kka e nngaw iye e lo llól yóómw schaal llól ráághil 2023 me ubwe metaff reel schaal iye ughal úlúmi.

Ngáli Seipél, mweteló reel https://www.cucgov.org/spn2023
Ngáli Tchiliyól, mweteló reel https://www.cucgov.org/tin2023
Ngáli Luuta, mweteló reel https://www.cucgov.org/rota2023

Ngare eyoor arongorong iye u mwuschel rebwe seleti, ngare u mwuschel kkapas ngáli escháy reel arongorong yeel, me ngare u mwuschel rebwe afanga ngare e-mail ngalúgh pappid yeel, fafailó CUC reel (670) 664-4282.

RIPOT KUÅLIDÅT HÅNOM ESTA MANAGUAHA

Iyon-mu 2023 na Ripot nu i Kuålidåt Hånom i CUC managuahayi på´gu giya on-line! På´gu na såkkan, in na´guahayi siparåo na ripot para kada´ isla: Saipan, Tinian, yan Luta. Esti na ripot siha masaguaniniyi impottånti na infotmasion put i tutuhonña yan kuålidåt put i Hånom ni un gigimin.

Put fabot baba i tinattiyi na web sites para un atan håfa siha mankutchinu ni masodda´ gi hålum i hånom-mu gi durántin 2023 na såkkan para un ke´tungu´ más put i hånom ni un gigimin.

Para Saipan, hånao para https://www.cucgov.org/spn2023
Para Tinian, hånao para https://www.cucgov.org/tin2023
Para Luta, hånao para https://www.cucgov.org/rota2023

Yanggin un nisissita i ripot matránslåda, ya malagu´ håo para un kuentusi håyi put i ripot, pat malagu' håo mahanåogui kopian påppit osino para u ma- "e-mail" kopia guatu giya hågu, put fabot ågang i CUC gi (670) 664-4282.

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-24-024
OFFICE SPACE LEASE FOR CUC ROTA's ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS & OPERATIONS

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), is soliciting competitive sealed proposals for the lease of a suitable office and operations support facility for the Headquarters of CUC's Administration and Operations on the island of Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The proposed office space must comply with American Disabilities Act (ADA), DPW, OSHA and CNMI Zoning regulation.

The RFP package may be obtained at the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration with CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The RFP package will be emailed to the registered Proponents email ID. For registration inquiries, please email Marcela Tenorio, CUC Senior Administrative Technician via email address, marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies of your submission must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked *"CUC-RFP-24-024, Office Space Lease for CUC Rota's Administrative Functions and Operations."* to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on July 12, 2024.** Proposals mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before the due date and time.

Proposers are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This proposal and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible offerors who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. All proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing proposers.

All Proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Proposer due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the proposal under this request, or to procure or contract for services

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on June 21, 2024** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Alvin King, CUC Rota Resident Manager at email address alvin.king@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio at marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the proposal, in the best interest of the government. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

JOHN C. MAFNAS
Acting Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Available for Public Review & Comment
PY2024 Annual Action Plan
July 8, 2024

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) announces the availability for public review and comment, the Program Year 2024 Annual Action Plan (AAP).

The AAP is mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Office of Community Planning and Development, for the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds received by NMHC. NMHC is the Grantee of these HUD funds. NMHC administers CDBG, HOME, and ESG programs on behalf of the CNMI.

The PY2024 AAP identifies NMHC's proposed use of HUD PY2024 CDBG, HOME, HTF and ESG funds totaling $1,493,326.89. A detailed list of the proposed projects and activities are shown below.

Community Development Block Grant		Project Sponsor	Project Type	Amount
1	CNMI Community Health Education and	Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation	Public Facility	$ 784,100
2	Planning and Administrative Costs	Northern Marianas Housing Corporation	Planning and Administrative Costs	$196,025.00
	Total			$980,125.00
Emergency Solutions Grant		Project Sponsor	Project Type	Amount
3	Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Assistance/ Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services	Homeless Prevention/ NMHC	Rapid Rehousing	$ 68,119.25
4	ESG Administrative Cost	NMHC	Program Administration	$ 6,090.75
5	Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)	NMHC	HMIS	$ 7,000.00
	Total			$ 81,210.00
HOME Investment Partnership Grant		Project Sponsor	Project Type	Amount
6	HOME Rehabilitation/ Homebuyer New Construction Program	NMHC	Affordable Housing	$ 339,564.55
7	HOME Administration	NMHC	Program Administration	$ 68,158.45
	Total			$407,723.00
Housing Trust Fund		Project Sponsor	Project Type	Amount
8	Acquisition and Rehabilitation of Housing	Konstruct Corp.	Affordable Housing	$ 24,268.89
				$ 24,268.89

The AAP will be available electronically on NMHC's website at www.nmhcgov.net. If you would like to obtain a copy or require additional information, please contact Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director at 234-6866 or by email at deputydirector@nmhcgov.net.

NMHC is inviting the public to comment on the proposed AAP. Public Hearings will be held on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. See detail below: Tuesday, July 23, 2024 at 5:00 pm at the NMHC Main Office Conference Room, Garapan; Wednesday, July 24, 2024, 5:00 p.m. at the Tinian Field Office, San Jose Tinian; and on Thursday, July 25, 2024, 5:00 p.m. at the Rota Field Office, Sinapalo III, Rota.

Any person(s), agency, or organization wishing to comment on the AAP are encouraged to do so by submitting written comments to the NMHC main office at Garapan, Saipan, and/or to the Rota and Tinian Field Offices, no later than 4:30 pm Friday, August 8, 2024. Written comments may also be submitted via facsimile at (670)234-9021 or by submitting via email to deputydirector@nmhcgov.net. Comments must be received no later than 4:30 pm Friday, August 8, 2024. Should you require special accommodations, please contact Ms. Mafnas, at the NMHC main office, at 670-234-6866.

Jesse S. Palacios
Corporate Director
This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD CPD funds

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXIV, Issue No. 135

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MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Biden warns Trump will trigger inflation

The Biden campaign is in utter disarray after last Thursday's televised debacle. But the spin machine hurls forward at warp speed.

Joe Biden's feeble debate performance last week pulled back the curtain on the administration's efforts to gaslight voters about the president's advanced age and declining mental acuity. Don't believe your own eyes, nothing to see here, move along.

So desperate are the Democrats to now change the subject that they would rather talk about inflation than the ramifications of keeping the doddering Mr. Biden on the ticket.

In a breathless Monday news release, the Biden Nevada campaign chose to highlight a report last week on a Reno TV station noting that "Economists Warn Second Trump Term Could Cause Inflation." According to the report, 16 Nobel Prize-winning economists signed a letter backing the president's economic policies and arguing that Donald Trump's agenda would "reignite" inflation if he is elected.

The chutzpah here is mind-boggling.

One might think that the Biden White House would hesitate to bring up inflation at all, seeing how the president's massive spending sprees following the pandemic "ignited" rising prices in the first place. But trying to spin the issue into a Trump liability is the height of cynicism.

Mr. Trump has a four-year record in the Oval Office. Rampant inflation isn't in his minus column. Mr. Biden, on the other hand, spent the first year of his presidency blithely asserting that rising prices were "transitory," that no reputable economist believed unchecked inflation was on the horizon. That was just months before the consumer price index soared to 9 percent annually, the highest level in 40 years, on his watch.

While inflation has tapered, prices remain elevated. That means American consumers remain frustrated at the supermarket checkout counter or the gas pump. This is reflected in polls that show the vast majority of Americans prefer Republicans and Mr. Trump when it comes to the economy. Mr. Biden's approval rating hovers in the mid-30s largely because of concerns with the economy and consternation over the exorbitant prices Americans must now pay for basic goods and services.

These 16 renowned economists are certainly entitled to their opinions. But did any of them warn the country that Bidenomics would trigger memories of the Jimmy Carter years dominated by massive price hikes, rising interest rates and stagflation? Or were they cheerleading for the very Biden policies that brought us $5-a-gallon gasoline and $20 fast-food meals? You know the answer.

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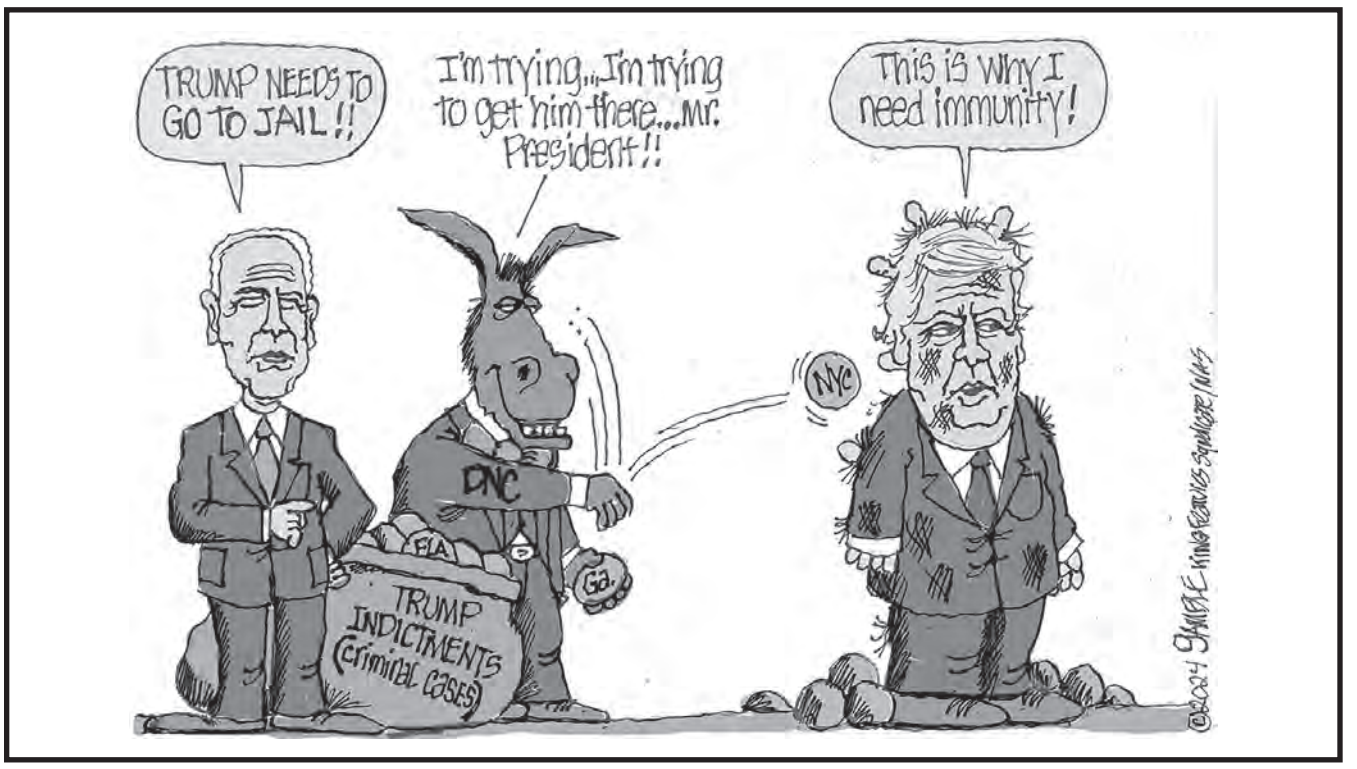


Zelenskyy lays out how Ukraine can win, if the West loses its fear of Putin

By TRUDY RUBIN
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member for the The Philadelphia Inquirer.

KYIV, Ukraine—When President Volodymyr Zelenskyy walked into the high-ceilinged, ornate conference room in the presidential office building, the exhaustion on his face was so stark I almost felt guilty about taking his time.

Wearing his trademark black T-shirt and olive drab pants, and arriving after a morning of security meetings, he appeared to be carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders. That may literally be the truth: The future of Western democracies rests heavily on what happens to Ukraine.

In a wide-ranging interview last week, Zelenskyy laid out how Ukraine could still win if the West can lose its fear of Vladimir Putin and recognize the Russian leader's weakness.

Zelenskyy defined what victory would mean. And he insisted that direct peace talks with Moscow wouldn't end the war but would encourage further Russian aggression against Ukraine, Europe — and America.

"It is impossible to help Ukraine with one hand and shake Putin's hand with the other," Zelenskyy insisted. "It will not work." It is not just a question of the West protecting Ukraine, he stressed. "It is Ukraine which protects all of the democratic countries that Putin will attack further on."

I entered the presidential offices through a heavily sandbagged rear building door and walked down long silent corridors. All electronics, including cell phones, were banned from the visit as a safety measure. There have been numerous Russian attempts to assassinate Zelenskyy, the most recent in May when Ukrainian intelligence busted a network of Russian agents aiming to take the president hostage and kill him.

It has been a rough few months for the Ukrainian leader. His forces stopped a Russian offensive in the north but Putin's troops are still advancing slowly in the east. The ground war is essentially stalemated.

But the tech-savvy Ukrainians have been making astonishing advances in drone warfare, which have brought the war home to Russia and driven the Kremlin's ships out of occupied Crimean ports on the Black Sea and back to Russian bases.

"The biggest [current] issue is with glide bombs," Zelenskyy told me, referring to Moscow's recent use of thousands of bombs each month that can be released at a great distance from their target, protecting the launching aircraft from antiaircraft defenses. "So you need to search for long-range solutions against their aerodromes where their military aircraft land, which Russia uses to launch glide bombs and missiles."

If President Joe Biden would let Ukraine use long-range U.S. missiles such as the recently delivered ATACMS to hit those airports in Russia, then the attacks could be prevented, Zelenskyy said. But so far that permission has not been granted. Ukraine's innovative, home-produced long-range drones are hitting those airports but don't have the power of missiles.

Biden recently gave permission for shorter-range U.S. missiles to be used just across the Ukrainian border where Russian troops were massing, which halted the Russian offensive toward Kharkiv.

"But that doesn't solve our issues," Zelenskyy told me. "It is tactical, not strategic."

I asked Zelenskyy whether he believed Biden wanted Ukraine to achieve victory.

"Yes," he answered quickly. "I think that for the United States it is important and for Europe and for many countries. But we can have different ideas toward the word victory."

"The West wanted to deny Putin the opportunity to fully occupy Ukraine and to put the aggressor in his place. I think for them it is the victory already," Zelenskyy said.

"But for us," he continued, growing emotional, "for the people at the front line who lost their brothers at arms, the civilians who lost their relatives, those who fled abroad but have husbands on the front line—for us, victory is a moment of satisfaction.

"We are grateful that the West did not let Russia occupy us [fully], but we need justice."

In other words, Zelenskyy, who still maintains a 60% popularity rating among Ukrainians, must listen to the voices of his people and his soldiers, who won't accept surrendering one fifth of their land to Russia after all they have suffered. That burden is visible in the lines on his face.

In practical terms, the first part of Zelenskyy's "real victory" is "not to allow the full destruction of everything Ukrainian" by Putin.

In Ukrainian territory occupied by Russia, Moscow tries to wipe out use of the Ukrainian language, the Ukrainian church, and the teaching of Ukrainian history. Children are taught that Ukraine was never a legitimate state.

Putin's true and imperialistic aim in invading Ukraine is to rebuild the historic Russian empire—by physical force or political subversion. Zelenskyy described how Russia is already pursuing that goal elsewhere: in Belarus, Georgia, and next stop — if the West doesn't push back against Putin—in the Baltic states, which are NATO members. By bombing Ukraine's cities he is trying to make the country unlivable and drive out the population.

The second part of "real victory," Zelenskyy specified, "is security for today and for future Ukrainian generations, and the impossibility of the repetition of aggression.

"We should be in the European Union for economic security. And we should be in NATO for physical security. If we don't

See ZELENSKYY on Page 7

Debit card fees get a deserved hit from the Supreme Court

By STEPHEN L. CARTER
Bloomberg Opinion

Stephen L. Carter is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist, a professor of law at Yale University and author of "Invisible: The Story of the Black Woman Lawyer Who Took Down America's Most Powerful Mobster."

Before announcing the outcome of Monday's Supreme Court decision in *Corner Post, Inc. v. Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System*, Justice Amy Coney Barrett joked that it wasn't the case the multitude had packed the courtroom to hear. And with the presidential immunity decision being handed down minutes later, the case of Corner Post has been a bit crowded out of the news cycle.

Which is unfortunate.

Because whatever one's views on the tribulations (and trials) of a certain Donald J. Trump, what happens on remand in Corner Post might well have a lasting impact on something everybody does: buying stuff.

According to the critics, because the Corner Post decision eases the path for people who sue administrative agencies, it represents just the latest fusillade in the court's assault on the regulatory state. But I'm less sure that Barrett's majority opinion is wrongheaded. And I'm intrigued that courts might soon be called upon to examine the merits of the "interchange" fees merchants pay to banks for debit card transactions.

That might not be a bad thing.

The case involves a challenge to a Federal Reserve rule called Regulation II, issued in 2021 under Dodd-Frank, to get a handle on debit card swipe fees. The rule, which applies to cards issued by banks with $10 billion or more in assets, sets a maximum debit card fee of .05% of the amount of the transaction, plus 21 cents. After Regulation II went into effect, the fees fell immediately, some by well over half. (E-retailers appeared to see the biggest initial drop.) (1)

Sounds good, right? The trouble is, many businesses think interchange fees are still too high—and they blame the Fed. The statute requires the Fed to assure that the fees "shall be reasonable and proportional to the cost incurred by the issuer with respect to the transaction." Retailers argue that the ceiling of .05% plus 21 cents is neither reasonable nor proportional. Efforts to litigate the issue have been unavailing.

Enter a North Dakota truck stop called Corner Post. In 2021, the truck stop sued the Fed, asserting that the rule's statutory maximum fee was more than what Dodd-Frank allows. What makes the lawsuit unusual is that Regulation II was finalized in 2011—a full decade before the suit was filed, and seven years before Corner Post opened for business.

A plaintiff who wants to challenge a federal agency rule on its face must file suit "within six years after the right of action first accrues." (2) The technical question before the justices was whether, as most federal courts have held, that means six years after the challenged rule is finalized; or whether, as the truck stop claimed, the suit may be filed six years after the injury materializes, no matter how long ago the rule went into effect.

The Supreme Court, in a 6-3 decision, held that the six-year period begins not when the rule takes effect, but "when the plaintiff has a complete and present cause of action"—meaning that the right to use "accrues" at the moment when the injury takes place.

Here's where things get a bit existential: In the case of Corner Post, no injury was suffered in 2011, when Regulation II went into effect, or in the ensuing seven years, because the truck stop did not exist. Rather, the injury was the hundreds of thousands of dollars in swipe fees the truck stop eventually paid to banks. Every penny was paid long after the rest of the retail world had been forced to learn to live with the rule; and long after the banks had become accustomed to the income stream.

That last part is what worries the critics. Taking the majority seriously, were I to launch a new business tomorrow, the next day I'd be able to file suit against almost any extant administrative regulation, no matter how ancient and venerable, as long as the rule costs me money.

But private entities get sued all the time to halt longstanding practices said to have caused the plaintiff harm. It's not clear why government agencies shouldn't bear the same risk.

Besides, most controversial federal regulations are challenged immediately, and most of those challenges fail. So even if a few of the new lawsuits succeed, the shock suffered by a regulated entity is likely to be not much different than what often happens to the rules when a new president takes over.

All of which leads us back to the interchange fees themselves. At the level of policy, I have some sympathy for the claim that they're too high—not because merchants are suffering, but because their customers are.

Poor customers in particular.

Swipe fees on debit and credit cards alike are regressive. Except in the rare case of a retailer that gives an explicit discount for cash—gas stations provide a prominent example—the fee is factored into the price of the good. Those fees, in turn, help subsidize credit card rewards, which are most likely to accrue to wealthier shoppers. Those who don't use plastic (or titanium!) subsidize those who do, paying the same price and getting none of the benefits. This is a well-known difficulty. Thus do lower-income customers (and older ones) subsidize the well-off.

None of this is what Corner Post had in mind in filing suit, and the puzzle might not have a regulatory solution. But only if rules are repeatedly tested are we likely to have a serious conversation on such topics.

(1) Credit cards typically charge higher transaction fees, but the plaintiffs in this case were only challenging debit card fees, perhaps because the contested regulation only applies to debit cards.

(2) The rule is different when a suit challenges the way a federal agency has applied its rules to the plaintiff.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

4th of July Hill

I just watched a beautiful fireworks display conducted along Tinian's Sanhalom Bay. It was a memorable end to another gorgeous 4th of July. Thank you to the organizers (and the funding source!).

I could not help thinking about the U.S. Marines who were stuck in the mountainous pinnacles north of Garapan this night, 80 years ago. They didn't have rock and roll, pretty ladies, or cold beer.

Some senior Navy type from "higher up" must have decided to give his Marines a 4th of July fireworks show—on a much, much larger scale. The Marines were ordered to dig in as deep as they could.

Then the show began.

Out of the thousands of cannons on the hundreds of battle ships offshore came Star Shells, lighting the island in an eerie false-dawn. Then came the monster high-explosive shells from 14- and 16-inch cannons from the battleships and cruisers. No doubt a few destroyer captains took the liberty to join the midnight salute.

Marines who had been shot at from island to island across the Pacific, sat up in their foxholes—very carefully.

And there it was, right out the Star Spangled Banner—*"And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air, Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there."*

That panicle-top theater, where our Marines watched their fireworks, was named 4th of July Hill.

Don A. Farrell
Marpo Heights, Tinian

ZELENSKYY

From page 6

have these two, there is a huge risk for us that the enemy will come back," he said. Ukraine has been invited to start EU accession talks, but the process is lengthy.

Yet Zelenskyy fears that the West—especially the United States—is still leery of pushing for real victory. "Everybody is still afraid that Russia can split apart, everybody is afraid of what will happen to Russia without Putin and whether it will stay as it is or get worse."

As a result, he said, Putin is free to pursue his strategy of taking as much as possible. "Any step forward on our territory, any occupation, any village even fully destroyed is positive for them, because it is important for them to bargain as much as possible," he noted.

At the opportune moment (especially if Donald Trump wins the presidency), "Putin can then say 'we are ready' [for talks] and while they are ready, they always need a pause.

"A cease-fire is the best option for the Russians so they can prepare for taking even more," Zelenskyy said.

Putin's victory would be incompatible with life for Ukraine, Zelenskyy told me. "Bit by bit, they are washing away Ukrainian independence. They take territory, then legislate [to annex it] or invent economic or security unions with Moscow, and then they dissolve the country in this mud, in this Russian mud.

"That is why we need to be strong, not to lose our country."

I asked Zelenskyy how Ukraine could overcome Russia's superiority in manpower and weapons.

His reply was clear. And from what I saw in my two weeks in Ukraine—including a visit to the eastern front line—it makes sense.

"First of all, manpower. Really, they have much more people, and really, we are taking care of our people more. But today we have one dead Ukrainian for six Russians" on the eastern and northern fronts, he said.

British intelligence sources say the Russians are now losing 1,200 men a day, the highest rate of the entire war. Even for a Russian military that treats soldiers like cannon fodder, this ratio is untenable.

"Second," Zelenskyy explained, "this is a different kind of war, a war of technologies, and the one who is more technologically advanced can win." That means the West must deny the Russians the opportunity to develop the manufacture of drones (including copies of Iranian Shaheds) and missiles, by preventing Russia from dodging sanctions on chips and spare parts that come from European allies — and from China.

Third, Ukraine is already producing advanced drones and racing toward production of advanced missiles. "But we need funding so that we can be more technologically developed than Russia," Zelenskyy said. This presents great opportunities for joint production with Western governments or private firms.

And fourth, further sanctions on Russia's oil and gas exports are needed, which would mean that in 2025, the Russian economy will be shrinking and will force Putin to raise taxes and skimp on social benefits for the public.

"What's the scariest for him is a dissatisfied Russian society," Zelenskyy said. "That is the nuclear weapon against a nuclear Putin. As soon as the West stops being afraid of Russia after Putin, Russia without Putin will happen more quickly. His circle around him will feel that."

The only possible negotiations Zelenskyy envisions would be talks based on his own peace plan calling for full withdrawal from Ukraine, reparations and justice for Russian war crimes.

But what about Trump, who wants to cut off military aid to Ukraine and says the can war can be over in 24 hours? The GOP presidential candidate has said he'd demand a cease-fire from both sides and force them to "negotiate," effectively giving Putin what he wants and preventing Ukraine from taking back more occupied land. Not to mention that Putin has broken every accord between Russia and Ukraine in the last three decades.

"If Trump has such a model [to end the war in 24 hours], well, everyone would like to finalize the war. Maybe even in one hour would be better," Zelenskyy joked. "But if the idea is to give up our territories, no, it will not solve the issue. It will not work; it will not lead to peace [globally] or between Ukraine and Russia.

"What is needed is to give us security. Membership in NATO is good not only for Ukraine; it would provide security for Russia," Zelenskyy said. The Ukrainian border would be fixed, no further Russian invasion could cause another war, and "the world wouldn't be afraid that Putin would come back again."

Sadly, the upcoming 75th NATO anniversary summit July 9-11 in Washington will not offer Ukraine a clear path to membership. "We understand that the White House is not ready to give us the invitation," Zelenskyy said with a weary shrug. And Trump is saying the war is NATO's fault.

"Unfortunately, this is the policy of one step forward, two steps back," the Ukrainian leader said, regretfully. "I don't think this is the policy of world leaders. These are the very cautious steps of my de-miners in the minefield.

"If the United States is afraid to annoy Putin, and this is the reason why we are not invited, then we ask our strategic partners to give us what would protect us: Patriots [anti-missile systems], a substantial number of F-16s, and the opportunity to use weapons [inside Russia].

"If NATO is not ready to protect us, and to take us into the alliance," Zelenskyy said firmly, "then we ask NATO to give us everything so we can protect ourselves."

At this moment, Putin smells American weakness and hopes for a Trump presidency that could cut off Ukraine and abandon NATO. Meanwhile, Putin is allied with Iran, North Korea, and China, which sees the fate of Ukraine as a litmus test for whether it can seize Taiwan. So it would be catastrophic if the White House failed to provide Ukraine with everything it needed—before the November election.

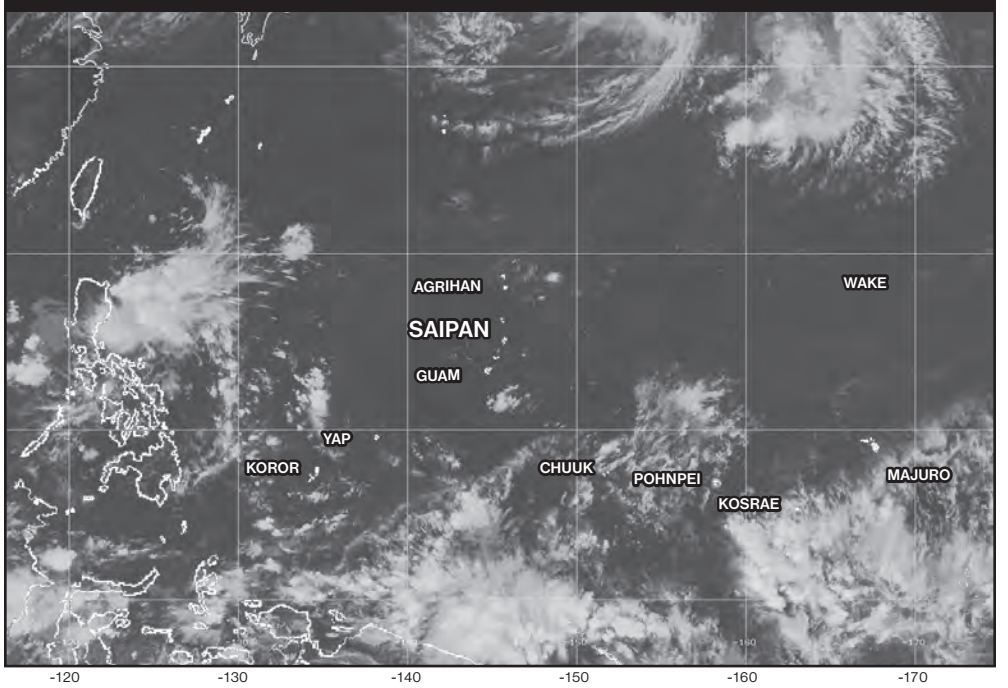
Watching the bone-tired Zelenskyy exit the conference room, bereft of the full backing he needs to defeat Putin, was painful, because Ukraine could still repel Russia. But that would require Biden to display the level of courage that Ukraine's president must summon every day.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy. A 30 percent chance of showers.	Mostly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of showers.	Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.
88° 77°	88° 77°	87° 77°	87° 77°	88° 77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 3:43 AM SUNDAY, JULY 7, 2024

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Introduced isolated thunderstorms in today`s forecast, as an upper-level trough to the east is moving in and interacting with minor surface disturbances to produce some lightning in eastern Guam waters overnight. Otherwise, the weather and marine forecasts for the Marianas remain unchanged.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: https://www.weather.gov/gum/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	88° / 80°
Palau	Partly Cloudy	83° / 76°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	86° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorm	85° / 79°
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	87° / 80°
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	87° / 81°
Majuro	Mostly Cloudy	87° / 82°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Rain/Wind	59° / 53°
Beijing	Showers	99° / 74°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	89° / 82°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	86° / 75°
London	Sunny	83° / 65°
Los Angeles	Sunny	82° / 58°
Manila	Thunderstorms	94° / 80°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	58° / 51°
Miami	Isolated Thunderstorms	88° / 80°
New York	Partly Cloudy	86° / 73°
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	92° / 77°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	90° / 67°
Busan	Rain	75° / 72°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	93° / 70°
Salem	Isolated Thunderstorms	89° / 71°
San Francisco	Cloudy	62° / 55°
Seoul	Cloudy	88° / 71°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	91° / 76°
Washington, DC	Isolated Thunderstorms	89° / 72°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:52 AM	6:51 PM
Tuesday	5:52 AM	6:51 PM
Wednesday	5:53 AM	6:51 PM
Thursday	5:53 AM	6:51 PM
Friday	5:53 AM	6:51 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	7:38 AM	8:51 PM	-
Tuesday	8:31 AM	9:30 PM	-
Wednesday	9:21 AM	10:05 PM	-
Thursday	10:08 AM	10:39 PM	-
Friday	10:53 AM	11:11 PM	-

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
3:35 AM	Low Tide	1.46
7:59 AM	High Tide	1.98
3:36 PM	Low Tide	-0.10
10:52 PM	High Tide	1.98

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JULY 1, 2024

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA076	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	11:50AM	2:25PM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily
UA193	6:50PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:10PM	9:10PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

7C3403/2305	4:45AM	10:20PM	Daily
UA076/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam
UA076/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily
7C3471	5:50PM	9:30PM	Daily from July 17

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX77	4:05AM	7:00AM	1, 5

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:50AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	5:30PM	9:55PM	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:25PM	4:20AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:25PM	6:15AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
UA184	11:50PM	5:45AM+1	2, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA192/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA184/174	10:25PM	8:50AM +1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
7C2306/3406	11:10PM	3:10PM+1	Daily
UA184/174	11:50PM	8:50AM +1	2, 5 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
7C3472	11:05AM	4:40PM	Daily
TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
7C3404	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

HX76	7:25PM	2:35AM+1	4, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 2, 2024

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	SAIPAN	ROTA	08:30	09:00	Daily
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	10:30	11:00	Daily
1303	SAIPAN	ROTA	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	ROTA	SAIPAN	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	11:30	12:00	Saturday & Sunday
3103	ROTA	SAIPAN	13:30	14:00	Monday To Friday
3104	ROTA	SAIPAN	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	ROTA	GUAM	11:30	12:00	Monday To Friday

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	GUAM	ROTA	12:30	13:00	Monday To Friday

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1201	SAIPAN	TINIAN	7:30	7:45	Daily
1202	SAIPAN	TINIAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	SAIPAN	TINIAN	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	SAIPAN	TINIAN	10:00	10:15	Daily
1206	SAIPAN	TINIAN	14:00	14:15	Daily
1207	SAIPAN	TINIAN	15:00	15:15	Daily
1208	SAIPAN	TINIAN	16:00	16:15	Daily
1209	SAIPAN	TINIAN	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2101	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
2102	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	TINIAN	SAIPAN	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	TINIAN	SAIPAN	10:30	10:45	Daily
2106	TINIAN	SAIPAN	14:30	14:45	Daily
2107	TINIAN	SAIPAN	15:30	15:45	Daily
2108	TINIAN	SAIPAN	16:30	16:45	Daily
2109	TINIAN	SAIPAN	17:30	17:45	Daily

Nation

Biden: Race up to voters not to Democrats on Capitol Hill

WILMINGTON, Del. (AP)—To a defiant President Joe Biden, the 2024 election is up to the public—not the Democrats on Capitol Hill. But the chorus of Democratic voices calling for him to step aside is growing, from donors, strategists, lawmakers and their constituents who say he should bow out.

The party has not fallen in line behind him even after the events that were set up as part of a blitz to reset his imperiled campaign and show everyone he wasn't too old to stay in the job or to do it another four years.

On Saturday, a fifth Democratic lawmaker said openly that Biden should not run again. Rep. Angie Craig of Minnesota said that after what she saw and heard in the debate with Republican rival Donald Trump, and Biden's "lack of a forceful response" afterward, he should step aside "and allow for a new generation of leaders to step forward."

Craig posted one of the Democrats' key suburban wins in the 2018 midterms and could be a barometer for districts that were vital for Biden in 2020.

With the Democratic convention approaching and just four months to Election Day, neither camp in the party can much afford this internecine drama much longer. But it is bound to drag on until Biden steps aside or Democrats realize he won't and learn to contain their concerns about the president's chances against Trump.

There were signs party leaders realize the standoff needs to end. Some of the most senior lawmakers, including Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi and Rep. James Clyburn, were now publicly working to bring the party back to the president. Pelosi and Clyburn had both raised pointed questions about Biden in the aftermath of the debate.

"Biden is who our country needs," Clyburn said late Friday after Biden's interview with ABC aired.

On Saturday, Biden's campaign said the president joined a biweekly meeting with all 10 of the campaign's nation co-chairs to "discuss their shared commitment to winning the 2024 race." Clyburn was among them.

But the silence from most other House Democrats on Saturday was notable, suggesting that lawmakers are not all being convinced by what they saw from the president. More House Democrats are likely to call for Biden to step aside when lawmakers return to Washington at the start of the week.

Biden had no public schedule Saturday, as he and aides stepped back from the fervor over the past few days. But the president will head out campaigning again on Sunday in Philadelphia, intent on putting the debate behind him. And this coming week, the U.S. is hosting the NATO summit and the president is to hold a news conference.

Vice President Kamala Harris campaigned Saturday in New Orleans, but she steered clear of questions about whether Biden should step away.

Beryl set to strengthen on approach to Texas due to hot ocean temperatures

With its unprecedented tear through the ultrawarm waters of the southeast Caribbean, Beryl turned meteorologists' worst fears of a souped-up hurricane season into grim reality. Now it's Texas turn.

Beryl hit Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula as a Category 2 hurricane on Friday, then weakened to a tropical storm. It's expected to reach southern Texas by Sunday night or Monday morning, regaining hurricane status as it crosses over the toasty Gulf of Mexico.

National Hurricane Center senior specialist Jack Beven said Beryl is likely to make landfall somewhere between Brownsville and a bit north of Corpus Christi Monday. The hurricane center forecasts it will hit as a strong Category 1 storm, but wrote "this could be conservative if Beryl stays over water longer" than expected.

The waters in the Gulf of Mexico are warm enough for the early-season storm to rapidly intensify, as it has several times before.

"We should not be surprised if this is rapidly intensifying before landfall and it could become a major hurricane," said Weather Underground cofounder Jeff Masters, a former government hurricane meteorologist who flew into storms. "Category 2 may be more likely but we should not dismiss a Category 3 possibility."

Beven said the official forecast has Beryl gaining 17 to 23 mph in wind speed in 24 hours, but noted the storm intensified more rapidly than forecasters expected earlier in the Caribbean.

"People in southern Texas now need to really keep an eye on the progress of Beryl," Beven said.

Masters and University of Miami hurricane researcher Brian McNoldy said hurricane center forecasters have been very accurate in predicting Beryl's track so far.

Already three times in its one-week life, Beryl has gained 35 mph in wind speed in 24 hours or less, the official weather service definition of rapid intensification.

The storm zipped from 35 mph to 75 mph on June 28. It went went from 80 mph to 115 mph in the overnight hours of June 29 into June 30 and on July 1 it went from 120 mph to 155 mph in just 15 hours, according to hurricane center records.

Colorado State University hurricane researcher Phil Klotzbach, using a different tracking system, said he counted eight different periods when Beryl rapidly intensified—something that has only happened in the Atlantic in July two other times.

MIT meteorology professor Kerry Emanuel doesn't give Beryl "much of a chance" for another 35 mph wind speed jump in the Gulf of Mexico, but said it's a tricky thing to forecast.

Beryl's explosive growth into an unprecedented early whopper of a storm shows the literal hot water the Atlantic and Caribbean are in right now and the figurative hot water the Atlantic hurricane belt can expect for the rest of the storm season, experts said. ***(AP)***

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NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) Board of Directors hereby gives notice that a regular meeting is being called on Thursday, July 11, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. in the ARFF Classroom located at the Airport Fire Station at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. The following items are on the agenda for the above-referenced meeting:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS: Call to Order and Roll Call
 A. Adoption of Agenda
 B. Adoption of Minutes: May 9, 2024, June 7, 2024, June 18, 2024 and June 20, 2024.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

III. CORRESPONDENCES

IV. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

V. AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

 A. SEAPORT FACILITIES COMMITTEE
  1. Rota Terminal & Transfer
  2. Tinian Marine Stevedore, Inc. (Request for Exclusivity and Warehouse)
  3. Seaport Facilities Committee Report

 B. FINANCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
  1. Supplemental Budget Requests:
   a. Tinian Airport Signage Project
   b. Tinian Airport Runway End Identifier Lights (REIL)
  2. Board Sanctioning and Supplemental Budget Requests:
   a. Saipan Airport Tower Renovations Change Order No. 3
   b. Saipan Airport Tower Renovation CM Amendment No. 3
   c. Saipan Commuter Terminal Construction CM Amendment No. 1
  3. Financial Affairs Committee Report (with Grants and Internal Audit Report)

 C. AIRPORT FACILITIES COMMITTEE
  1. Public Displays at CPA Facilities
  2. Car Rental Concessions:
   a. Saipan CPA-RFP-004-24 Authority Concession Grant CRS-2024-01–06
   b. Tinian CPA-RFP-005-24 Authority Concession Grant CRT-2024-07–10
   c. Rota CPA-RFP-006-24 Authority Concession Grant CRR-2024-11–13
  3. Airport Facilities Committee Report

 D. PERSONNEL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
  1. Amendment to Personnel Rules and Regulations
  2. Comptroller Position
  3. Austerity
  4. Time and Attendance Presentation
  5. Personnel Affairs Committee Report

VI. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION/LEGAL MATTERS
  1. Executive Director's Report and Staff Presentations

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the agenda items. A time limit may be imposed. Video conferencing is available via Zoom. ZOOM LINK: Meeting ID: 898 0318 0837 Passcode: 573227

JOSE C. AYUYU
Chairman, Board of Directors

July 5, 2024

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp Website: http://www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com

INVITATION FOR BID (IFB) NMHC IFB 2024-008

(This ad is paid by NMHC by HUD funds)

BID SUBMISSION DATE: August 08, 2024, 2:00 p.m.

MARIANAS HIGH SCHOOL GYM HVAC PROJECT

Project Package will be available on June 24, 2024, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays. A non-refundable payment of One-Hundred Dollars ($100.00) is required for each set of the project package. Payment must be made payable to NMHC and receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the project package at the reception counter.

Brief description of the project package is available on the NMHC CDBG-DR Website at https://www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com/ "Procurement Tab".

The provisions on the NMHC Procurement regulations, NMIAC 100-60-725 AND 100-60-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be held at the NMHC Central Office Conference located in Garapan, Saipan on **July 09, 2024, 10:00 a.m.** In addition, a Mandatory site Visit/Inspection of the project site will be conducted immediately after the Pre-Bid Conference. Failure to attend both the Mandatory Pre-bid conference and the Mandatory site Visit/Inspection will be considered a non-responsive bidder.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-9447 or via email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net during business hours, 7:30am – 4:30pm Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

/s/ MERCED "MARCIE" M. TOMOKANE
Chairwoman
NMHC Board of Directors

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp Website: http://www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com

INVITATION FOR BID (IFB) NMHC IFB 2024-009

(This ad is paid by NMHC by HUD funds)

BID SUBMISSION DATE: August 15, 2024, 2:00 p.m.

PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM (PSS) FRANCISCO M. SABLAN (FMS) MIDDLE SCHOOL REHABILITATION PROJECT

Project Package will be available on July 01, 2024, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays. A non-refundable payment of One-Hundred Dollars ($100.00) is required for each set of the project package. Payment must be made payable to NMHC and receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the project package at the reception counter.

Brief description of the project package is available on the NMHC Website at www.nmhcgov.net or the CDBG-DR Website at www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com "Procurement Tab".

The provisions on the NMHC Procurement regulations, NMIAC 100-60-725 AND 100-60-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be held at the NMHC Central Office Conference located in Garapan, Saipan on **July 12, 2024, 10:00 a.m.** In addition, a Mandatory site Visit/Inspection of the project site will be conducted immediately after the Pre-Bid Conference. Failure to attend both the Mandatory Pre-bid conference and the Mandatory site Visit/Inspection will be considered a non-responsive bidder.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-9447 or via email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net during business hours, 7:30am – 4:30pm Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

/s/ MERCED "MARCIE" M. TOMOKANE
Chairwoman
NMHC Board of Directors

World

WORLD BRIEFS

New UK prime minister vows to heal wounds of distrust after Labour landslide

LONDON (AP)—Britain's new prime minister, Keir Starmer, vowed Friday to reverse the hopelessness that grew over 14 years of Conservative rule and said he would lead an urgent mission of national renewal after his Labour Party's landslide victory. It will be a tall order. Rising poverty, crumbling infrastructure, a lagging economy and an overstretched National Health Service contributed to widespread dissatisfaction and gripes about "broken Britain." The resulting defeat was the worst ever for Conservatives. "Have no doubt that we will rebuild Britain," Starmer said in his first official remarks as supporters cheered and waved union jack flags outside 10 Downing St. "Brick by brick we will rebuild the infrastructure of opportunity." Starmer said it would take time, but his government would get the NHS "back on its feet," secure the borders, improve public safety and cut electric bills—while relying on homegrown clean energy. Among the crowd of people who gathered to watch the changing of government was David McKeever, who said Starmer needed to quickly provide the details of his plans that were often lacking during the campaign. "From today onwards, Keir Starmer is going to have to come up with some actual policies and implement them," McKeever said. "We'll know in time what we're dealing with. But yeah, clearly the Tories had set such a monumentally low bar, you could have fallen over it." Before Starmer arrived at No. 10, his predecessor, Rishi Sunak, bid farewell in a reflective speech from the same spot where he called for the snap election that led to his ouster. "I have heard your anger, your disappointment, and I take responsibility for this loss," Sunak said. "To all the Conservative candidates and campaigners who worked tirelessly but without success, I'm sorry that we could not deliver what your efforts deserved."

Vatican excommunicates former ambassador to US and declares him guilty of schism

ROME (AP)—The Vatican on Friday excommunicated its former ambassador to Washington after finding him guilty of schism, an inevitable outcome for Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano. The conservative had became one of Pope Francis ' most ardent critics and a symbol of the polarized Catholic Church in the United States and beyond. While once enjoying support in the Vatican and U.S. church hierarchies, the Italian archbishop alienated many as he developed a fringe following while delving deeper into conspiracy theories on everything—from the coronavirus pandemic to what he called the "Great Reset" and Russia's war in Ukraine. The Vatican's doctrine office announced the penalty after a meeting of its members on Thursday and informed Vigano of its decision on Friday. It cited Vigano's public "refusal to recognize and submit to the Supreme Pontiff, his rejection of communion with the members of the church subject to him, and of the legitimacy and magisterial authority of the Second Vatican Council." The excommunication, which Vigano incurred automatically with his positions, means he is formally outside communion with the church, and cannot celebrate or receive its sacraments. The crime of schism occurs when someone withdraws submission to the pope or from the communion of Catholics who are subject to him. Unlike defrocking, a punitive measure that makes a priest a layman again, excommunication is considered a "medicinal" penalty and is declared in hope those who incurred it would repent and come back into communion. If that happens, the Holy See can lift the penalty.

Brazil's Bolsonaro indicted for alleged money laundering for undeclared diamonds from Saudi Arabia

SAO PAULO (AP)—The indictment of former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro for money laundering and criminal association in connection with undeclared diamonds from Saudi Arabia marked the far-right leader's second formal accusation, with more potentially in store. The indictment on Thursday by Federal Police, confirmed by two officials with knowledge of the case, followed another formal accusation in March against Bolsonaro, for allegedly falsifying his COVID-19 vaccination certificate. Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly.

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INVITATION FOR BID
PROJECT NO. CPA-IFB-007-24-(REPACKAGED)

SUBMISSION DATE: AUGUST 07, 2024 (2:00 PM)

"PROVIDE & INSTALL SIX (6) BRAND NEW COMMERCIAL AIR-CONDITIONING UNITS AT THE FRANCISCO M. BORJA/TINIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

THE BID PACKAGE IS AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP AT THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY (CPA) ACCOUNTING OFFICE, 2ND FLOOR, DEPARTURE BUILDING, FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT BEGINNING JULY 08, 2024. AN ADMINISTRATIVE FEE OF $100.00 SHALL BE PAID TO CPA BEFORE A BIDDER MAY OBTAIN THE BID PACKAGE. PAYMENTS SHALL BE IN CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK, OR CREDIT CARD.

BIDDERS ARE TO SUBMIT ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND TWO (2) COPIES OF THEIR BID IN A SEALED ENVELOPE AND MARKED "PROVIDE & INSTALL SIX (6) BRAND NEW COMMERCIAL AIR-CONDITIONING UNITS, **(IFB-007-24-REPACKAGED)**" TO THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON OR BEFORE 2:00 P.M., AUGUST 07, 2024. BIDDERS SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATIONS ALL CHARGES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCUREMENT BEFORE FINALIZING ITS BID PRICE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020 AND 1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CPA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CPA.

LEO B. TUDELA DATE: _____
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY (CPA)
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NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) Board of Directors hereby gives notice that a special Financial Affairs Committee meeting is being called on Tuesday, July 9, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. in the Meeting Room located on the first floor of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport on Saipan. The following items are on the agenda for the above referenced meeting:

AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, ADOPTION OF AGENDA

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. SPECIAL MEETING ITEM:
1. Fiscal Year 2025 Budget
2. Supplemental Budget Requests on Board agenda (07/11/24)
   a. Tinian Airport Signage
   b. Tinian Airport Runway End Identifier Lights
   c. Saipan Airport Tower Renovations Change Order 3 and CM Amendment 3
   d. Saipan Commuter Terminal Construction CM Amendment 1
3. Procurement
4. Bids
5. Financial Affairs Committee Report

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

V. MISCELLANEOUS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

VI. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. A time limit may be imposed. Video Conferencing is also available via Zoom.
Zoom link: Meeting ID: 898 0318 0837 Passcode: 573227

DOLORES P. KIYOSHI
Chairman, Financial Affairs Committee

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR REAPPOINTMENT OF INCUMBENT MAGISTRATE JUDGE

The current term of office of United States Magistrate Judge Heather L. Kennedy at the District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands is due to expire on June 10, 2025. The United States District Court is required by law to establish a panel of citizens to consider the reappointment of the magistrate judge to a new four-year term.

The duties of a magistrate judge in this court include the following: (1) conducting preliminary proceedings in criminal cases; (2) trying and disposing of misdemeanor cases; (3) conducting various pretrial matters and evidentiary proceedings delegated by the District Judge; and (4) trying and disposing of civil cases upon consent of the litigants. The basic jurisdiction of a United States Magistrate Judge is described in 28 U.S.C. § 636.

Written comments from members of the bar and the public are invited as to whether the incumbent magistrate judge should be recommended by the panel for reappointment by the court. Comments must be received by **August 1, 2024.** Send written comments to the address listed below or to reappointment@nmid.uscourts.gov.

Amanda Hayes, Chambers Administrator
U.S. District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands
United States Courthouse, 1671 Gualo Rai Road
P.O. Box 500687
Saipan, MP 96950

NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS MUSEUM OF HISTORY & CULTURE

REGULAR BOARD MEETING NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41 § 11, the Northern Mariana Islands Museum of History & Culture hereby gives notice that a Regular Board of Governors Meeting will be held on Thursday, July 11, 2024 at 9:00am at the Northern Marianas Humanities Council Conference Room in Gualo Rai, Saipan.

MEETING AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Establish Quorum
3. AdopDon of Agenda
4. AdopDon of Minutes: April 10, 2024 MeeDng
5. Public Comments
6. Chairman's Report
7. ExecuDve Director's Report
8. Bylaws Commi\ee Report
9. New Business
   a. ExecuDve Director's Goals and PrioriDes
   b. Bylaws Amendments
10. ExecuDve Session
11. Miscellaneous/Announcements
12. Adjournment

/s/ Leo Pangelinan, Chairperson
NMI Museum Board of Governors

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY (CPA)
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT,
2ND Floor Arrival Bldg.
PO BOX 501055•SAIPAN•MP•96950 Phone: (1-670) 237-6500/1 Fax: (1-670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com Website: www.cnmiports.com

NOTICE OF SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) Board of Directors hereby gives notice that a special Board of Directors meeting is being called on Thursday, July 9, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. in the Meeting Room located on the first floor of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Saipan. The following items are on the agenda for the above referenced meeting:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS:
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda

II. PUBLIC COMMENT(S)

III. SPECIAL MEETING ITEM(S):
1. Rota Terminal and Transfer, Co.

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

V. MISCELLANEOUS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

VI. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. A time limit may be imposed. Video Conferencing is also available via Zoom.
Zoom link: Meeting ID: 898 0318 0837 Passcode: 573227

JOSE C. AYUYU
Chairman, Board of Directors

Life & Style

Dustin Hoffman, Patrick Mahomes among celebrities at Wimbledon

LONDON (AP)—Actor Dustin Hoffman and Super Bowl winner Patrick Mahomes were among the celebrities watching Carlos Alcaraz play Frances Tiafoe on Friday in the third round on Centre Court at Wimbledon.

The 86-year-old Hoffman was sitting in the Royal Box, an area reserved for special guests invited by the All England Club, while Mahomes and his wife, Brittany, were in the stands.

The presence of Hoffman—who won an Oscar for his role in "Rain Man"—was perhaps fitting on a day when showers disrupted play at the grass-court Grand Slam tournament both in the morning and afternoon.

AP

Dustin Hoffman reacts as he watches the third round match between Spain's Carlos Alcaraz and Francis Tiafoe of the United States at the Wimbledon tennis championships in London, Friday, July 5, 2024.

The match between Alcaraz and Tiafoe was played under a retractable roof, keeping everyone dry.

Hoffman is no stranger to Wimbledon. In 2012, he was in Serena Williams' player box to watch the American's fourth-round match.

Mahomes, the Kansas City Chiefs quarterback who won his third Super Bowl title this year, had also attended a Morgan Wallen concert in Hyde Park in central London on Thursday.

Other famous names in the Royal Box on Friday included composer Andrew Lloyd Webber and Prince Michael of Kent.

Brad Pitt movie about Formula 1 will simply be called 'F1'

AP

Actor Brad Pitt walks through the paddock before the British Formula One Grand Prix race at the Silverstone racetrack, Silverstone, England, on July 9, 2023.

LONDON (AP)—Brad Pitt's movie about Formula 1 coming to cinemas next year will simply be called "F1," the racing series said Friday.

Seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton is a co-producer of the project, which collected footage at F1 circuits around the world this year and last.

Footage was taken at Silverstone—home of the British Grand Prix—and at the Hungaroring near Budapest; as well as the historic Spa Francorchamps in Belgium; Japan's popular Suzuka track; and Abu Dhabi's Yas Marina circuit.

Pitt was at Silverstone on Friday and walked through the paddock area.

In the film, the 60-year-old American plays a former driver who returns to F1 alongside a rookie teammate, who is played by London-born actor Damson Idris. Their fictional team is called APXGP.

The film is directed by Joseph Kosinski of "Top Gun: Maverick" fame.

The film will be released next June, F1 said in a statement.

Cambodia welcomes the Met's repatriation of centuries-old statues looted during past turmoil

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP)—The return to Cambodia this week of 14 sculptures that had been looted from the country during a period of war and unrest is like welcoming home the souls of ancestors, Cambodia's culture minister said Thursday.

The items repatriated from New York's Metropolitan Museum of Ar t arrived Wednesday and were displayed to journalists and VIPs on Thursday at the National Museum in the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh.

They "were made between the 9th and 14th centuries in the Angkorian period and reflect the Hindu and Buddhist religious systems prevailing at that time," the museum said in a statement this week.

A statement from Cambodia's Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts said the "historic homecoming of national treasures" followed several years of negotiations between Cambodia's art restitution team, U.S. federal prosecutors in New York, investigators from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Metropolitan Museum.

AP

Cambodian museum staff members prepare an artifact statue as it returned from U.S to Cambodia, before an official ceremony at the Cambodian National Museum in Phnom Penh Cambodia, Thursday, July 4, 2024.

Cambodian Culture Minister Phoeurng Sackona said the return of the artifacts was very important for the Cambodian people for recalling the heritage of their ancestors through good times and bad.

"The pieces were staying a long, long time abroad, but today they returned to Cambodia, like a blessing for our people for peace, stability in our country now," she said.

To Cambodians, the returned artworks carry with them the souls of their ancestors, she said. Bringing back the souls of ancestors also includes bringing history, admiration and knowledge, Phoeurng Sackona said.

She said without elaborating that Cambodia hopes to receive very soon another 50 artifacts from the U.S. Cambodia claims that other items illegally trafficked from the country are still at the Metropolitan, as well as at other museums and in the hands of private collectors.

"These returns contribute to the reconciliation and healing of the Cambodian people, who endured decades of civil war and suffered tremendously from the tragedy of the Khmer Rouge regime," Phoeurng Sackona said. "They also demonstrate the truly positive partnership we have developed with the United States."

For the art world, their return is the fruit of a reckoning in recent years over art and archaeological treasures taken from their homelands. These include not only ancient Asian artworks, but also pieces lost or stolen in turmoil in other places, such as Syria, Iraq and Nazi-occupied Europe.

Adoptive family burned by daughter's birth mom

DEAR ABBY: We adopted our daughter, "Opal," at the age of 2. She is 6 now. Opal lived with us off and on as a newborn, but by age 1, she lived permanently with us. We live in a small community, so everyone knows everyone. Opal lived with her biological mom prior to adoption.

We tried to allow interaction between them with certain rules in place. However, Opal was recently permitted to spend two hours with her biological mother at a party for a sibling. Opal asked to come back home, so she was dropped off. I later found out her bio mom told her she gave birth to her so SHE is her REAL mother.

We never hid the adoption from Opal. We speak about it in a way that isn't negative or hurtful. Since this happened, Opal has reverted to being clingy and wakes up with that conversation on her mind. How do I address this with her bio mom and with our daughter?

REALLY MOM IN KENTUCKY

DEAR REALLY MOM: First address this with your daughter. Explain that when her bio mom gave birth to her, she was unable to keep her, so she gave her to you to raise. Tell Opal you love her, she fills your heart with joy every day and that you, unlike her bio mom, will be there for her every day of your life.

Then, tell the woman who gave up your daughter that you had planned to tell Opal about the adoption when she was a little older, that she bungled the situation and that, for the foreseeable future, you want her to stay away and not further traumatize Opal.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I have been married to my husband for 34 years. Seven years ago, we retired to a little town on the Oregon coast. I love the ocean and the area we are living in. There is so much to explore.

I'm writing because, since the pandemic, my husband has changed. He is addicted to the news 24/7. If I say anything to him about it, he gets defensive and says, "I told you when I retire I'm going to sit in my recliner and watch TV," but I didn't take him literally.

I'm going crazy. I leave, take my camera and go, but I can't do that 24/7. We have dogs to take care of. I had no idea retirement was going to be so hard. I volunteered at the dog kennel but had to quit because I hurt my shoulder. Please help me to cope or suggest how I can approach him without getting my head bitten off.

FRUSTRATED IN OREGON

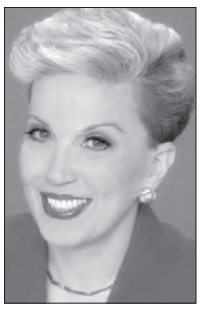
DEAR FRUSTRATED: Your husband may be hooked on the adrenaline rush he gets from watching the news or be using it as an escape. Whatever his reason, for the sake of your sanity, you must find more activities and friendships to fill the empty space he once occupied in your life.

You live in a beautiful area, and you are already immersed in photography. It may be time to exercise your mind and expand your interests. Please consider exploring your options.

■■■

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY
BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

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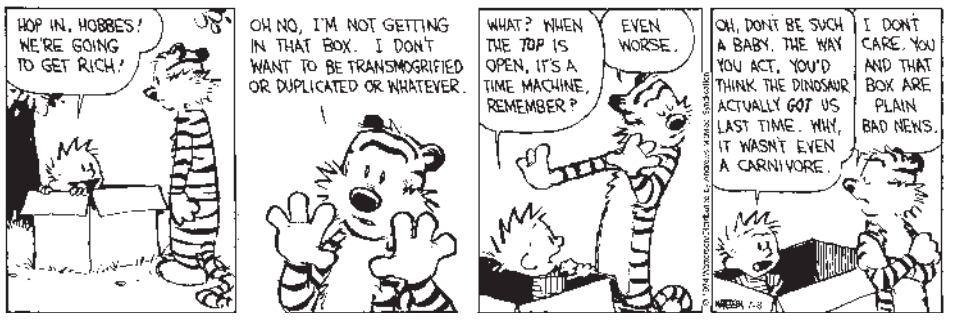
Pastimes

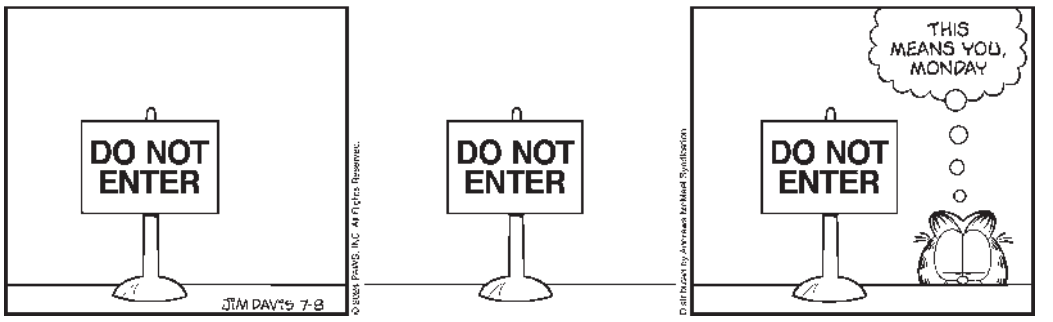
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


HOP IN, HOBBES! WE'RE GOING TO GET RICH!
OH NO, I'M NOT GETTING IN THAT BOX. I DON'T WANT TO BE TRANSMOGRIFIED OR DUPLICATED OR WHATEVER.
WHAT? WHEN THE TOP IS OPEN, IT'S A TIME MACHINE, REMEMBER?
EVEN WORSE.
OH, DON'T BE SUCH A BABY. THE WAY YOU ACT, YOU'D THINK THE DINOSAUR ACTUALLY GOT US LAST TIME. WHY, IT WASN'T EVEN A CARNIVORE.
I DON'T CARE. YOU AND THAT BOX ARE PLAIN BAD NEWS.

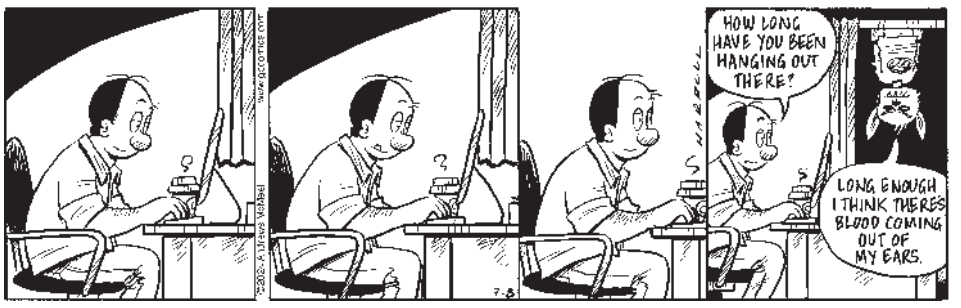
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

WE CHANGED THE SHOCKS, BUT THEN WE NOTICED A SQUEAKING SOUND WHEN WE TEST-DROVE IT.
...SO WE CHECKED THE MOTOR MOUNTS, THE BEARINGS, THE TIE-RODS, AND THE BUSHINGS. BUT WE STILL CAN'T LOCATE THE SOURCE.
I THINK YOU LEFT YOUR SQUEAKY BONE IN THE BACK SEAT.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Work by Maya Angelou
5 Pugilist's punch
8 Cruising
12 "Cogito — sum"
13 Verse form
14 Cleans the floor
15 Read quickly
16 Strongman of myth
18 "Shucks!"
20 50th anniversary
21 Stereo alternative
23 Born as
24 Birthright
28 Walked (on)
31 Rock producer Brian
32 Imam's faith
34 Shoe width
35 Final Four gp.
37 Coat-of-arms system
39 License to drill?
41 Ward of "Sisters"
42 Without markup
45 Persian king
49 Dried plants
51 Party pooper
52 Sheltered
53 Einstein's birthplace
54 Sunrise direction
55 Does tailoring
56 Golfer Ernie
57 Deli loaves

DOWN
1 Cuban money
2 Symphonic gp.
3 "Zounds!"
4 "My friend," in Paris
5 "A Beautiful Mind" subject
6 Citric beverage
7 Floating ice mass
8 Talisman
9 Fused together
10 Fencing sword
11 Org.
17 Anti
19 Indian flatbread
22 Leers at
24 Coop dweller
25 SASE, e.g.
26 Pothole repairers
27 Canal inspections?
29 Not 'neath
30 Susan of "L.A. Law"
33 Like ganders
36 Pueblo structures
38 Pantry
40 Fed. benefits provider
42 Cries of discovery
43 Prefix with conference
44 Verifiable
46 MRI forerunner
47 Lighten
48 Pvt.'s superiors
50 Under the weather

Solution time: 21 mins.

A	B	S			S	K	I	L	L		G	A	M	E
L	E	A			H	E	M	I			E	G	A	D
B	E	I	H	A	Y	A	L	L			N	E	W	S
S	I	E	E	L	E			I	P	O				
					I	L	D		B	R	A	S	I	I
T	O	M	F	I			F	F	F			F	M	I
A	B	I	I			B	L	I			M	E	A	N
C	O	N			H	E	Y			K	A	R	M	A
T	F	A	S	F	T			C	O	G				
				P	F	A			O	R	N	A	T	F
J	A	D	E			M	A	K	E	A	B	E	T	
F	R	A	N			A	R	I	A		B	C	C	
K	E	N	T			X	M	E	N		A	S	H	

Last Friday's answer 7-8

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12				■	13			■	14			
15				■	16			17				
18				19		■	20					
■	■	■	21			22	■	23			■	■
24	25	26					27	■	28		29	30
31			■	32				33	■	34		
35			36	■	37				38			
■	■	39		40	■	41				■	■	■
42	43				44	■	45			46	47	48
49						50		■	51			
52				■	53				54			
55				■	56				57			

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Sophia Bush, 42; Milo Ventimiglia, 47; Kevin Bacon, 66; Anjelica Huston, 73.

Happy Birthday: Get involved in groups and activities that have meaning. Channeling your energy to vent and pursue your dreams will change how you live, love and treat others. Take the initiative to make things happen instead of waiting for someone to take over. Review contracts, investments and how you earn your living. Discipline and innovation will help you improve your health and prospects. Your numbers are 9, 16, 22, 26, 31, 44, 47.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Check out what's available in your community. Participation will lead to information, friendships and a new lease on life. Broadening your horizons will encourage a positive attitude and a passage to personal pride and enjoyment. Speak up and find your tribe. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Changing your attitude and actions will help you avoid an emotional confrontation. Search for ways to compromise, and set a standard, encouraging others to do the same. Don't be afraid to take a unique path where health, appearance and love issues arise. ✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Stick close to home. Refuse to let others take advantage of you, your skills and your generosity. It's time to take care of your needs first, to build strength and courage, and to take advantage of opportunities that encourage reflection and personal growth. Learn from experience. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Set priorities and stick to your plans. A high-energy approach will ensure you reach your target, gain respect from others and feel self-satisfaction. A positive change regarding your appearance and health is apparent if you diligently follow the protocol outlined to generate success. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22)*: Sit tight, observe and research the possibilities. Consider what brings you joy and encourages personal growth. Expand your circle by participating in functions that make you feel accomplished or good about who you are and what you offer. Embrace life with love, passion and integrity. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22)*: Sign up for something enlightening. Reach out to people from different backgrounds and consider every angle of a situation to ensure you understand what's in your best interest. Don't be a follower. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Broaden your outlook by studying the facts. Plant your feet firmly on the ground and put your energy into something that allows you to discover how to use your skills in weird and wonderful ways. Your foresight will help you build a better future. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Your actions will impact others and bring you in contact with those who can help turn your ideas into something tangible. A personal adjustment is apparent, and with creative input and a trendy new look, it will help you promote positive change. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Your enthusiasm is infectious; use it to your advantage. Don't let anyone diminish your chance to get ahead. Let your light shine brightly, take on responsibilities that make others take note and don't allow anyone to oust you from your just desserts. ✪✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Pay attention, focus on what's important and meaningful, and look for ways to improve your relationships, love life and overall stability. How you choose to live will determine your quality of life. Positive alternatives are available and will enhance your life. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Take your time, organize and plan, research your choices and initiate what you want to achieve with confidence. Refuse to let what others do or say influence your decision. Home improvements that add to your convenience or comfort are favored. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Consider your objective and alternatives to reach your goal. Actions will affect how you feel about yourself and what you accomplish. A change may not be welcome or gain everyone's approval, but take advantage of the proposition if it's good for you. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are diligent, insightful and commanding. You are creative and thoughtful.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	5	2		1		6	4	9
	3		2			7	1	8
					4	5	2	
	6		5	8	3	4		
		5					3	
	8		4			1	7	
	1			9				
5	2	6		3	7	9		4
		8	6			3	5	

Difficulty: ★ 7/8

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Friday's Answer

9	7	5	3	4	2	6	1	8
1	4	8	6	5	7	2	9	3
2	6	3	9	1	8	5	4	7
4	3	2	8	6	5	1	7	9
8	1	6	7	9	3	4	2	5
7	5	9	4	2	1	8	3	6
3	8	4	2	7	6	9	5	1
5	2	7	1	8	9	3	6	4
6	9	1	5	3	4	7	8	2

Difficulty: ★★★★ 7/5

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

DABNEY COLEMAN (1932-2024) **Solution: 8 letters**

E	R	I	P	M	E	K	L	A	W	D	R	A	O	B
E	I	S	T	O	O	T	E	N	N	I	S	N	J	R
E	V	E	S	Y	M	R	A	F	M	S	G	E	E	E
L	I	M	(E)	S	G	T	R	U	H	O	A	N	G	G
I	E	A	(M)	S	E	E	E	O	L	N	I	O	O	G
M	R	G	(M)	Z	S	C	R	D	A	A	K	T	L	A
T	A	R	(Y)	N	I	T	E	M	T	N	E	R	D	D
H	M	A	O	O	T	N	T	R	A	N	L	A	E	D
G	E	W	V	I	P	R	E	Y	A	N	L	H	N	N
I	N	T	M	O	A	T	B	A	C	N	Y	W	G	A
L	I	E	N	H	N	A	H	G	E	M	D	H	L	K
N	C	D	Y	E	B	E	Q	U	I	N	C	Y	O	A
O	S	R	E	T	N	U	H	P	L	A	C	S	B	O
O	A	N	I	M	A	T	I	O	N	D	O	V	E	L
M	E	R	L	E	A	L	L	E	R	E	D	N	I	C

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Animation, Ann, Army, Baby, Boardwalk Empire, Cinderella, Cinema, Cloak and Dagger, Dove, Emmy, Entertainer, Fresno, Germany, Golden Globe, Jean, Kelly, Mary Hartman, Meghan, Merle, Moonlight Mile, On Golden Pond, Quincy, Randy, Recess, Riviera, Scalphunters, Short Time, Tennis, Tootsie, Voice, WarGames, Wharton, Zeta

Last Friday's answer : Graceland

The NEW **Volume 77** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com. or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

Cubs' Steele pitched a two-hitter for his first career complete game

CHICAGO (AP)—Justin Steele pitched a two-hitter for his first career complete game, Seiya Suzuki homered and the Chicago Cubs beat the Los Angeles Angeles 5-1 on Friday.

Steele (1-3) dazzled in his first victory in 13 starts this season. The left-hander threw 95 pitches, striking out seven and walking two, while lowering his ERA from 3.20 to 2.95.

The crowd of 36,948 cheered when he came out for the ninth inning and roared when Brandon Drury grounded out to end the game.

The Cubs won their second straight after losing eight of 10. The Angels dropped their fifth in a row since a season-high six-game win streak.

Steele won 16 games last season and made his first All-Star team. He missed six weeks this year after straining his left hamstring in the opener at Texas and hadn't received much run support since his return. He got enough this time.

AP

Chicago Cubs' Justin Steele delivers a pitch during the ninth inning of a baseball game against the Los Angeles Angels, Friday, July 5, 2024, in Chicago.

PIRATES 14, METS 2

PITTSBURGH (AP)—Paul Skenes threw seven strong innings and Pittsburgh tied a franchise record by smashing seven home runs in a demolition of the New York Mets.

Bryan Reynolds homered from both sides of the plate, including a grand slam, and Rowdy Tellez had a grand slam among his two homers.

Skenes (5-0), a 22-year-old rookie, allowed two runs on four hits with a walk and eight strikeouts while his ERA ticked up slightly to 2.12.

The mustachioed right-hander has struck out seven or more batters in nine of his first 10 starts, the most ever by a pitcher over the first 10 games of his career. Skenes has thrown 74 pitches of at least 100 mph this season, more than double anyone else in the majors.

Yet Skenes didn't just beat the Mets with his heat. The last of his 107 pitches was an 87 mph slider that Harrison Bader whiffed at, bringing just the second sellout crowd of the season at PNC Park to its feet as the 6-foot-6 top overall pick in the 2023 draft made his way to the dugout.

WHITE SOX 3, MARLINS 2

MIAMI (AP)—Drew Thorpe threw 6 1/3 innings of one-run ball, Nicky López doubled twice and drove in two runs and the Chicago White Sox beat Miami.

Luis Robert Jr. had two hits, two walks and two stolen bases for the White Sox, who won their first opening game of a road series this season. They were 0-14 before Friday.

The Marlins lost their fifth straight and dropped to an NL worst 30-58.

CARDINALS 7, NATIONALS 6, 11 INNINGS

WASHINGTON (AP)—Willson Contreras hit a tying homer in the ninth inning, Masyn Winn scored the go-ahead run on a passed ball in the 11th, and St. Louis rallied from an early 5-0 deficit to beat the Washington.

Contreras struck out with one out in the 11th and Winn on third against Dylan Floro (3-2), but the ball got past catcher Riley Adams, who was working his first inning behind the plate after Keibert Ruiz was lifted for a pinch-runner in the 10th.

In the ninth, Nationals closer Kyle Finnegan left a 2-2 fastball over the middle of the plate to Contreras, who sent it 407 feet over the wall in right-center to make it 5-all.

Ryan Helsley (3-3) worked two innings and retired the side in the 11th on two popups and a grounder. Keibert Ruiz's run-scoring single in the bottom of the 10th scored the automatic runner to make it 6-6, Helsley's third blown save of the season.

PHILLIES 8, BRAVES 6

ATLANTA (AP)—Trea Turner hit a pair of two-run home runs off Max Fried, Aaron Nola earned his 100th career victory and Philadelphia beat Atlanta.

The NL East-leading Phillies extended their lead over second-place Atlanta to 10 games by winning the opener of the weekend series.

Nola (10-4) retired Atlanta's first 10 batters before giving up a one-out single to Ozzie Albies in the fourth inning. Austin Riley followed with a two-run homer to center field. Albies had three hits, including a homer, and Marcell Ozuna added a three-run shot in the eighth off José Alvarado.

TIGERS 5, REDS 4

CINCINNATI (AP)—Rookie Colt Keith homered twice, Parker Meadows and Riley Greene also went deep and Detroit held off Cincinnati.

Meadows led off the third with a 410-foot homer to right field. After Reds center fielder Stuart Fairchild's catch robbed Matt Vierling of an extra-base hit, Keith hit one out to almost the same spot as Meadows in the right-field seats.

Keith then had a two-run shot in the fifth, and Greene led off the seventh with his team-leading 17th homer, another deep shot to right field.

The Tigers got an outstanding start from right-hander Reese Olson, who pitched no-hit ball through four innings. He left after 5 2/3, allowing just two runs and three hits and striking out eight.

RED SOX 5, YANKEES 3, 10 INNINGS

NEW YORK (AP)—Masataka Yoshida hit a tying, two-run homer off Clay Holmes with two outs in the ninth inning, Ceddane Rafaela homered against Tommy Kahnle leading off the 10th and Boston stunned New York and sent the Yankees to their 14th loss in 18 games.

Boston overcame a 3-0 deficit, starting the comeback when Romy Gonzalez hit his first home run of the season leading off the fifth.

Holmes, without a save since June 9, allowed pinch-hitter Dominic Smith's two-out single in the ninth. Yoshida fell behind 0-2, then drove a full-count pitch—Holmes' sixth straight sinker—into the right-field seats for his third homer.

With an automatic runner on second, Rafaela homered on a 1-0 fastball over the heart of the plate from Kahnle (0-1), the rookie's 10th home run this season.

GIANTS 4, GUARDIANS 2

CLEVELAND (AP)—Michael Conforto hit a two-run double as San Francisco won for the eighth time in their last 11 games, beating Cleveland.

Patrick Bailey added a sacrifice fly and Nick Ahmed had an RBI single for the Giants, who built a 4-0 lead in the fourth inning against Guardians ace Tanner Bibee (7-3).

Cleveland, which has the best home record in the majors at 28-11, got a solo homer from Josh Naylor and a sacrifice fly from Andrés Giménez.

RANGERS 3, RAYS 0

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)—Corey Seager extended his hitting streak to 10 games with a two-run double and Michael Lorenzen combined with four relievers on a three-hitter as Texas blanked the Tampa Bay.

Seager went the opposite way with a double into the left-center field gap after consecutive two-out singles in the third inning by No. 9 batter Jonathan Ornelas and leadoff hitter Marcus Semien. Nathaniel Lowe drove in Seager with a single for the only other Texas run.

Lorenzen (5-4) gave up one hit and struck out four, but walked five in his five innings. Lorenzen walked the bases loaded in the fifth before striking out Brandon Lowe, the final batter the right-hander faced.

Jose Leclerc worked a scoreless inning after relieving Lorenzen. Jacob Latz got two outs, David Robertson pitched 1 1/3 innings and Kirby Yates worked a perfect ninth for his 12th save in as many chances.

ASTROS 13, TWINS 12

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Alex Bregman had a three-run homer and Houston held off Minnesota after taking an eight-run lead into the bottom of the ninth.

Jeremy Peña had three hits, scored three times and drove in three runs to help the Astros win for the 13th time in 5 games. They are a major league-best 21-9 since June 1.

Down 13-5 after Houston scored three times in the ninth, the Twins fell just short with a seven-run outburst. Josh Hader came on with two outs and gave up a grand slam to Carlos Correa before striking out Manuel Margot for his 15th save.

Twins designated hitter Jose Miranda went 4 for 4, setting a team record with 10 straight hits.

ROCKIES 4, ROYALS 2

DENVER (AP)—Brenton Doyle broke an eighth-inning tie with a two-run double in Colorado's victory over Kansas City.

Doyle finished with three hits, the tiebreaking double coming off reliever John Schreiber (3-3). Michael Toglia had a solo home run for Colorado that weathered a replay review.

Salvador Perez had an RBI single and Freddy Fermin added three hits, including a single off Jalen Beeks leading off the ninth inning. Nick Loftin followed with a single before Beeks retired the next three batters for his eighth save. Victor Vodnik (2-1) worked a scoreless inning in relief for the victory.

MARINERS 2, BLUE JAYS 1

SEATTLE (AP)—Luis Castillo limited Toronto to two hits over a dominant 6 2/3 innings, Luke Raley had a two-run double in the third and Seattle beat Toronto.

Castillo (7-9) was nearly untouchable in his 200th career start, retiring each of the first nine Blue Jays hitters, and not allowing a hit until Kevin Kiermaier hit a solo home run with one out in the sixth.

Castillo's only blemish before Kiermaier's homer was a leadoff four-pitch walk to Spencer Horwitz in the fourth inning.

ORIOLES 3, ATHLETICS 2

OAKLAND, Calif (AP)—Albert Suárez struck out six over six sharp innings and won back-to-back outings for the first time this season, pitching Baltimore past Oakland.

The right-hander (5-2) surrendered Miguel Andujar's first-inning home run but settled in to hold down an A's lineup coming off consecutive 5-0 shutouts and a series sweep of the Los Angeles Angels.

Coming off his first quality start of the season, Suárez allowed two runs on four hits and walked one as the Orioles won for the seventh time in nine games following a five-game losing streak. Baltimore is now 56-32 and joined four previous Orioles teams to win at least 56 of their initial 88 games and are the first to do so since 1979.

Craig Kimbrel pitched a 1-2-3 ninth with two strikeouts for his 22nd save to finish the 2 hour, 28 minute game in front of an announced crowd of 9,654.

DODGERS 8, BREWERS 5

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Freddie Freeman singled in the go-ahead runs with two outs in the eighth inning, Will Smith homered three times, and Los Angeles rallied past Milwaukee Brewers.

Daniel Hudson (6-1) got the win in relief and Evan Phillips struck out the side in the ninth to earn his 14the save.

Milwaukee's Rhys Hoskins hit a grand slam in the fourth, but the Dodgers avoided their third loss in a row.

PADRES 10, DIAMONDBACKS 9

SAN DIEGO (AP)—All-Star Jurickson Profar hit a tying home run leading off the ninth inning and Manny Machado walked it off with a two-run shot in San Diego's wild victory over Arizona.

The Diamondbacks had stunned the Padres by rallying from a five-run deficit in the top of the inning to take an 8-7 lead on Alek Thomas' first career grand slam with one out and pinch-hitter Randal Grichuk's go-ahead, two-run shot with two outs, both off Robert Suarez.

But Profar hit his 13th homer to right-center on a 3-2 pitch from Paul Sewald (0-2). Jake Cronenworth walked and was replaced by pinch runner Tyler Wade. Machado then hit his 12th homer, to left-center to send the crowd of 47,171—the largest in Petco Park history—into a frenzy.

Bronny James makes NBA Summer League debut

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Once that second-quarter layup went in and he finally had his first NBA points after a trio of misses, Bronny James could exhale and everything began to slow down.

He hardly expects to be perfect at this early stage of his professional career, and every touch and possession will provide an opportunity for growth and learning.

He sure felt the love and support Saturday, even playing in the Bay Area ruled by Stephen Curry and the Warriors.

"The atmosphere, it was more than I expected," a grinning James said. "It's a big game for me, but I didn't know the people of Golden State would come and rep for me, so that was pretty nice to see."

Oversized headphones on his ears and dressed in full Lakers gold as he geared up for his NBA Summer League debut Saturday, the rookie looked so much like his famous father, LeBron, it caused some at Chase Center to do a double-take.

Down to their familiar manerisms, facial expressions and the way they run or shuffle back on defense. Bronny James took his place in the starting lineup for the Los Angeles Lakers and his professional career was formally underway, with plenty of scouts in the building to witness it as he wore jersey No. 9—not to be confused with his dad's former 6 uniform he sported before switching to 23.

AP

Los Angeles Lakers guard Bronny James dribbles during the first half of an NBA summer league basketball game against the Sacramento Kings in San Francisco, Saturday, July 6, 2024.

"Every first game that I step on the next level there's always some butterflies in my stomach, but as soon as the ball tips and we go a couple times down it all goes away and I'm just playing basketball," he said. "It's always going to be there but get through it."

The younger James wound up 2 for 9 for four points, missing all three of his 3s, with a pair of assists, two rebounds and a steal in just under 22 minutes of court time—21:43 to be exact—as the Lakers lost 108-94 to the Sacramento Kings.

James missed his initial two shots while playing nearly six minutes in his first action — grabbing a defensive rebound 1 minute, 20 seconds into the game then missing a 21-foot jump shot moments later. He came up short on a 26-foot 3-point try at the 4:23 mark of the opening quarter before getting a breather.

There were cheers and a warm ovation when James returned to the court at the 8:17 mark of the second quarter. He was initially whistled for his first career foul on a 3-point attempt by Sacramento's Xavier Sneed on the right wing with 7:23 remaining, and James argued briefly before the play went to replay review and was overturned. James missed a 3 off the front rim from the top of the arc at 7:04.

Then, at last, James scored his first NBA points on a driving layup 5:51 before halftime.

"Moments like that can slow the game down for you especially because I wasn't as productive as I wanted to beforehand," he said. "... I couldn't get the 3-ball to fall, but all the reps it's going to come more smooth."

James missed a pair of free throws at the 4:43 mark of the third period in his first trip to the line.

At one point during his warmup routine, the 6-foot-2 guard stood with hands on hips in a resemblant position to one of his father. And during the game, the son leaned over by the baseline 3-point corner, gripping his knees while waiting for the offensive possession to begin.

The younger James was drafted by the Lakers with the 55th overall selection in the second round out of the University of Southern California.

He will get another chance to play Sunday, when the Lakers face the Warriors, again at the Chase Center. Coach Dane Johnson plans to give James plenty of chances to acclimate and gain valuable experience in the coming days and weeks.

"Hopefully he'll play all the games, we'll see how it goes," Johnson said. "We're going to try to integrate him and get him as many reps as we can. He needs more experience playing."

Johnson applauded James' keen court awareness, noting, "we all know he has good instincts already, so finding the consistency within those he'll build as we keep going forward in the summer league and throughout the coming season. His instincts are there, we've just got to keep building habits."

If all goes as planned, the 19-year-old James and his dad would become the first father-son pair to play in the NBA at the same time — and on the same team no less.

"What he does in the California Classic and Summer League, it doesn't matter if he plays well and it doesn't matter if he doesn't play well," LeBron James said at USA Basketball's training camp in Las Vegas. "I just want him to continue to grow, practices, film sessions, his individual workouts. You can't take anything as far as stat wise from the California Classic and Summer League and bring it once the season starts. The only thing that matters is him getting better and stacking days."

Bronny is NBA career scoring leader LeBron's oldest son. He survived cardiac arrest last July 24 during an informal team workout at USC and it was later determined he had a congenital heart defect. The younger James signed a four-year contract that will pay him $7.9 million.

He will remind himself along the way to stay aggressive and "believe in myself knowing I can make plays for myself and my teammates."

"Looking at my mistakes and looking at the things I did right is really good for me," James said. "But also just game by game growing that comfort in my playing my game, I feel like that's a big part of why I come out here and get those reps in."

Hawks complete deal to send Dejounte Murray to Pelicans for package including 2 first-round picks

ATLANTA (AP)—The Atlanta Hawks completed a trade Saturday that sends high-scoring guard Dejounte Murray to the New Orleans Pelicans for a package of two first-round draft picks and three veterans.

The trade announced by the Hawks sends guard Dyson Daniels, forward-center Larry Nance Jr. and center Cody Zeller to Atlanta. The Hawks will receive a 2025 first-round pick and a conditional 2027 first-rounder. The 2027 pick will be a top-four protected selection that will be the least favorable of picks attached to the Pelicans and Milwaukee.

Atlanta did not have a first-round pick next year before making the trade, which was finalized more than a week after the framework of the Murray deal was first reported.

The Hawks made swing player Zaccharie Risacher of France the No. 1 overall pick in the NBA draft last month before trading AJ Griffin to Houston to obtain a second-round pick used to obtain rights to guard/forward Nikola Djurisic of Serbia.

The Murray trade comes after the Hawks were unable to win a playoff series in his two seasons joining Trae Young as the team's high-scoring backcourt.

"Our goal is to build a contending team that can compete deep into the playoffs," general manager Landry Fields said in a statement released by by team.

"It became evident after further analysis and evaluation this offseason that we needed to reshape our roster and regain assets that would allow us to further build out our team. It is certainly difficult to trade a player like DJ but we knew it was best for our organization to move forward this way. We wish he and his family only the best."

The Hawks finished 10th in the Eastern Conference at 36-46 this season and haven't won a playoff series since advancing to the Eastern Conference finals in 2021.

Murray, 27, averaged a career-high 22.5 points with 6.4 assists this season. He has averaged 15.4 points in seven seasons, including five with San Antonio.

"Dejounte is among the best two-way guards in the NBA and adds another dimension to our team, and we could not be more excited to welcome him and his family to New Orleans," Pelicans basketball operations chief David Griffin said in a statement released by the team.

The 6-foot-7 Daniels averaged 5.8 points, 3.9 rebounds and 2.7 assists in 61 games, including 16 starts, with New Orleans last season. He provides a defensive boost, addressing a weakness for the Hawks, after ranking 10th in the NBA with 1.4 steals per game.

Franz Wagner, Magic agree to 5-year extension

Franz Wagner has agreed to the largest contract in Orlando Magic history, a five-year extension that will be worth at least $224 million, a person with knowledge of the negotiations told The Associated Press on Friday.

The contract value could reach $270 million if he becomes supermax eligible, said the person who spoke on condition of anonymity because the agreement cannot yet be announced.

The NBA's offseason moratorium on such moves gets lifted Saturday.

Wagner has averaged 17.8 points in his three seasons with the Magic. He averaged 15.2 points as a rookie before climbing to 18.6 and 19.7 over the last two seasons, respectively.

The 22-year-old forward who helped Germany win the World Cup last summer and is slated to play at the Paris Olympics starting later this month has teamed with Paolo Banchero to give the Magic one of the league's top young frontcourts.

Wagner, who played at Michigan, has started all 231 of his appearances with the Magic, a team coming off a Southeast Division title and the franchise's first playoff berth in four years. Orlando pushed Cleveland to a seven-game series before losing in the first round.

Wagner's extension begins with the 2025-26 season. ***(AP)***

Defending champion Alcaraz comes back to beat Tiafoe in the third round

LONDON (AP)—Carlos Alcaraz found himself pushed to a Grand Slam fifth set again, this time at Wimbledon, this time against good pal Frances Tiafoe. And as he usually does under such circumstances, no matter how much trouble he might have been in, Alcaraz surged to the finish.

Avoiding a surprising exit, the defending champion got past Tiafoe 5-7, 6-2, 4-6, 7-6 (2), 6-2 on Friday to reach Wimbledon's fourth round in an entertaining match filled with moments of brilliance and a series of momentum swings across its 3 hours, 50 minutes.

AP

Spain's Carlos Alcaraz reacts after winning a point against Francis Tiafoe of the United States during their third round match at the Wimbledon tennis championships in London, Friday, July 5, 2024.

"I push the opponent just to be at 100%, physically and mentally, and play at 100%," Alcaraz said, describing the mindset that has helped him go 12-1 in five-setters. "Sometimes for the other player, it's difficult to (stay) at this kind of intensity."

In front of a Centre Court crowd that included Kansas City Chiefs star quarterback Patrick Mahomes and Oscar-winning actor Dustin Hoffman, and under a closed retractable roof that amplified the thuds of rackets-on-balls, grunts and cheers, the third-seeded Alcaraz was outplayed for stretches by No. 29 Tiafoe.

But Alcaraz was better at the business end, the way he was when overturning 2-1 deficits in sets before winning in five in the semifinals and final en route to the French Open title last month.

"I let him dictate a little too much," Tiafoe said. "Yeah, I mean, that's kind of all it was."

He was unable to pull out what would have been a breakthrough victory for someone who arrived at Wimbledon with a sprained ligament in his right knee and a losing record this season.

Sure came close, though.

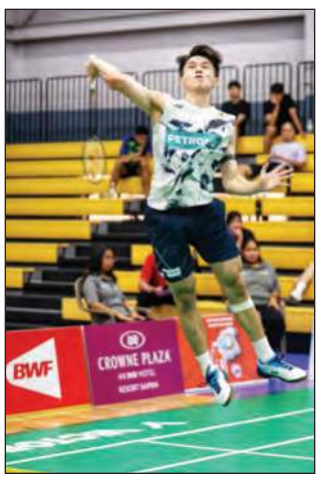
The 26-year-old American was two points away from getting the chance to serve for the win, getting to love-30 on Alcaraz's serve at 4-all in the fourth set.

"Huge," Tiafoe called it.

But Alcaraz claimed the next four points, capped by an ace at 130 mph (210 kph). He then dominated the ensuing tiebreaker, grabbing a 5-0 lead.

In the final set, Tiafoe held in the opening game, but that was pretty much that. At 1-all, Alcaraz got the last break he needed by smacking a passing shot Tiafoe let fly by; the ball at the baseline, spraying chalk.

Women reaching the fourth round on a rainy day were 2023 U.S. Open champion Coco Gauff, 2021 U.S. Open winner Emma Raducanu, French Open runner-up Jasmine Paolini, No. 19 Emma Navarro — the American who eliminated Naomi Osaka earlier in the week — 2017 U.S. Open finalist Madison Keys, Donna Vekic and Lulu Sun. Four men's matches didn't get done because of the showers, but No. 1 Jannik Sinner, No. 10 Grigor Dimitrov and No. 12 Tommy Paul did advance.



LEIGH GASES

Men's No. 5 seed Justin Hoh leaps for a smash during his first set finals matchup in the Badminton World Federation Grade 3 International Challenge tournament–the Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2024–yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

LEIGH GASES

Unseeded Sakura Masuki of Japan looks up for a return during the second set of the women's singles finals in the Badminton World Federation Grade 3 International Challenge tournament–the Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2024–yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

LEIGH GASES

Women's singles No. 3 seed Kaoru Sugiyama of Japan fully extends for a return during the first set of the women's finals in the Badminton World Federation Grade 3 International Challenge tournament–the Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2024–yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

LEIGH GASES

Unseeded Kai Cheng of Chinese Taipei eyes the birdie during the first set of his finals matchup in the Badminton World Federation Grade 3 International Challenge tournament–the Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2024–yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

LEIGH GASES

Men's No. 5 seed Justin Hoh makes contact for a return during the first set of his finals matchup in the Badminton World Federation Grade 3 International Challenge tournament–the Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2024–yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

LEIGH GASES

Unseeded Sakura Masuki of Japan reaches for a return during the first set of the women's singles finals in the Badminton World Federation Grade 3 International Challenge tournament–the Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2024–yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

CHENG

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coughed up an error at the net in his return to secure the 22-20 win for Cheng.

Hoh actually had the game in control at the beginning of the second set as he pushed for a tie-breaking third set, but Cheng's attacks and placements allowed him to catch up from a 7-15 deficit.

From there, Hoh was rooted to the ground as Cheng fought for every point until he caught up, 16-16, and finally had his first lead of the game, 17-16. Hoh stagnated at 16 points, until Cheng led, 19-16. Hoh was then fired up until the game deadlocked at 19-19, then 20-20.

For 19-year-old Cheng after his match, he said that he was very happy with his win. He said that the match was hard because Hoh was a very good player, but he felt that his attacks were stronger and better—which landed him the win.

Earlier, the women's singles finals featured a matchup between Japanese players No. 3 seed Kaoru Sugiyama and Sakura Masuki.

Sugiyama had the upper hand and remained superior as she controlled both sets to win the title, 21-17, 21-15.

Masuki actually kept pace with Sugiyama in the first set until Sugiyama pulled away once it reached 18-17. Sugiyama then left Masuki choking on her dust after landing four straight final points to own the first set.

The second set then saw Masuki struggle to keep up as Sugiyama led early, 4-1. But then, a resurgence of energy for Masuki tied the game up, 4-4, and she immediately took the lead, 5-4.

It was a tug-of-war with the lead from there until Sugiyama found her stride again and locked in to regain another big advantage, 18-13. Masuki could only land two more points which dashed her hopes for a third set as Sugiyama landed her final three points for the title.

For 21-year-old Sugiyama, this win added another title in her international tournament run. She previously won the women's singles finals of the 2023 Peru Challenge.

She said of this finals, "I was very nervous because it was a match against another Japanese player, but I think it was good because I was able to give it my all."

As to how she felt about winning it over her teammate, she said, "I've played against her many times in Japan and I really wanted to win, so I'm glad I was able to win this tournament."

With most finalists in this tourney being Japanese players, she said, "There are already more advanced competitions going on at the same time, so I think it was good that the Japanese team was able to take the top spot at this IC [International Challenge]."

Results of the mixed doubles, women's doubles, and men's doubles will be posted in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune*.

GOLF

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The tournament itself was challenging, said Sasamoto. "The course was hard and it was fast… but I had to be composed and I pulled through in the end," said the 2023 Pacific Games NMI National Golf Team player.

He said his favorite hole was the last hole where he needed to birdie to win—which he did. "We had three holes left and the two holes were very hard. So, I knew if I parred those two holes, it would be okay, but the last hole—just so that there's no doubt, I had to birdie it—and I did," he said. "That was a big moment because it was the moment that counted."

After he made that birdie, he said he finally felt like he breathed a sigh of relief after it felt like he held his breath during the other 17 holes.

As to why he decided to stay in the Championship Flight instead of the Senior Flight, he said, "I had a choice, but I told Dung that I already committed to the Championship Flight… that's where all the good players are at and that's the flight to win."

He then said since he was a teenager, he's never played in any other flight other than the Championship Flight. "My dad threw me into championship flights and that's all I've ever played—if you want to win a flight in a golf tournament—that's the flight to win.

On his thoughts of the event, he said, "I'm so proud of Dung for putting it together and making it such a successful event—but it's only every five years and you can't win this until five years later—so I knew I had to win this."

Looking ahead, he then said that he hopes to make it into the NMI National Golf Team for the 2025 Pacific Mini Games in Palau—whether as a coach or a player.

Every milestone year, the Joeten DaiDai Foundation hosts the JMGC to help support various causes and nonprofit organizations within the CNMI. This year, the JMGC was held on the 75th anniversary of Joeten and the late Jose Camacho Tenorio's 101st birthday.

Meanwhile, winners in other divisions of the tournament will be reported in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune*.

JUNIOR

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outlasted Samoa's Maryallyson Vaai 2-6, 6-2, 10-6.

Then, in the girls 16, Chung beat Fiji's Tekura Tamangaro 6-4, 6-3; Wang extended No. 4 seed Puline Hyun of Papua New Guinea to a tiebreaker in the first set but lost 6-7, 4-6; and Hannah Chae lost 0-6, 1-6, against Loto.

The Junior Championship features players from the NMI, American Samoa, Vanuatu, Guam, Samoa, Tahiti, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Cook Islands, Tuvalu, and the Federated States of Micronesia.

The tourney runs until Friday, July 12.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NMI team coaches Jeff Race, left, and Colin Ramsey supervise the NMI National Junior Tennis Team warmups prior to matches getting underway in Lautoka, Fiji.

Cubs' Steele pitched a two-hitter for his first career complete game

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Sports

Defending champion Alcaraz comes back to beat Tiafoe in the third round

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Cheng, Sugiyama finish strong in singles finals

LEIGH GASES

Unseeded Kai Cheng of Chinese Taipei gets some air time as he gets ready to fire a smash during the second set of the men's singles finals in the Badminton World Federation Grade 3 International Challenge tournament—the Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2024— yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

LEIGH GASES

Women's singles No. 3 seed Kaoru Sugiyama of Japan sets up for a smash during the first set of the women's finals in the Badminton World Federation Grade 3 International Challenge tournament—the Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2024—yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The finals of the Badminton World Federation Grade 3 International Challenge tournament—the Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2024—was decked out with the flag of the Land of the Rising Sun as all but one match featured Japanese badminton players yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The only non-Japanese players were in the men's finals which saw a dramatic upset between the tourney's No. 5 seed Justin Hoh and unseeded Kai Cheng of Chinese Taipei.

Cheng controlled the first set, 21-12, then in the second set, rallied later after falling behind early to seal the upset and his win, 22-20.

But as a top player, Hoh found his stride and momentum in the crucial second set after he was discarded quickly in the first. However, a close call at the in/out boundary proved to inevitably be Hoh's downfall. It was a tied 20-20 game when Hoh allowed the birdie to drop instead of opting to return it, and was called inside to give the advantage to Cheng.

After a few seconds of discussion, the inside call stood which made it 21-20, in favor of Cheng. In Hoh's last chance, Cheng drew the serve—and after a few exchanges, Hoh

See CHENG on Page 15

Junior netters secure playoffs spot; doubles teams advance to semis

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Eleven junior netters secured a playoff spot in their singles division on the continuation of the 2024 Pacific Oceania Junior Championship over the weekend in Lautoka, Fiji, while NMI doubles teams advanced to the semis after their matches yesterday.

La Hunn Lam, Anne Lee, Hoo Wang, Ryan Choi, Ian Chae, June Yu, Nason Wessel, Siwoo Lee, Henry Choi, Irin Chung, and Hannah Chae are in the playoffs today of their respective age groups after they wrapped up pool play yesterday.

With Lam's win over Solomon Islands' John Taufunu, 6-0, 6-1, yesterday, he solidified an undefeated 4-for-4 run in the boys 16U singles.

In the girls 16U doubles matchups, Chung and Wang pulled through in three tough sets over Samoa's Toaiva Loto and Dora Moors, 6-4, 3-6, 10-5, to make it to the semis.

Then, Anne paired up with Guam's Faith Perera in the girls 14U doubles and won over Solomon Islands' Jen Tahunipue and Tahiti's Meheti Tohetiaatua, 6-1, 6-4.

In the boys 16U doubles match, the duo of Lam and Wessel put on a clinic against Devansh Singh and Tyrone Speed, 6-3, 6-1.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The NMI's Hoo Wang cocks back for a return during her match in the 2024 Pacific Oceania Junior Championship over the weekend in Lautoka, Fiji.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The NMI's La Hunn Lam smacks a serve during his matchup in the 2024 Pacific Oceania Junior Championship over the weekend in Lautoka, Fiji.

Ian and Choi, in the boys 14U doubles, blasted through Solomon Islands' Pio Ruhasia and Fiji's Zaraan Singh, 6-4, 6-2; and Yu and Guam's Junhuyk Seo made it past Tahitians Tham and Mataihau Sacault, 7-5, 6-4.

Last Saturday, Wang put up a 6-3, 6-2 winner over Latoya Fruen of Samoa. In 12's team action, both Emma Lang and Stella Choi won their respective singles matches to defeat Papua New Guinea.

Then, Lee won 7-5, 6-0 against Jen Tahunipue from Solomon Islands; Wessel took on Fiji's Aryan Lal and came out on top, 6-1, 6-1; and Siwoo Lee and Henry Choi kicked off the doubles competition by beating the Fijian duo of Rezwan Khan and Aryan Lal.

Last Friday, Lam eliminated No. 4 seed Ao Li of Fiji, 6-3, 6-1, and wrapped it up with a win over Toanui Lee Tham, 6-2, 6-1. Meanwhile, Wessel narrowly lost to Tahiti's No. 1 seed Hiva Kelley 7-6, 6-4; Tham then bested NMI's Henry Choi, 6-7, 7-5, 10-5.

In the boys 14, Ryan Choi extended his winning streak with a 6-0, 6-1 drubbing of Fiji's Zanaar Singh; Ian Chae fought hard but lost to Fiji's Frank Sun, 1-6, 0-6. In the girls 14, Lee

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Sasamoto takes flight in Joeten Memorial Golf Classic

LEIGH GASES

Joe Sasamoto, center and winner of the Championship Flight, poses with Joeten Daidai Foundation organizing committee's Shigeki Tenorio, left, and Dung Tenorio during the awards ceremony of the 2024 Joeten Memorial Golf Classic last Saturday at the LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort last Saturday.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Joe Sasamoto's decision to stay in the Championship Flight paid off as he ruled the 2024 Joeten Memorial Golf Classic last Saturday at the LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort east course.

Age doesn't matter in the sport of golf and it showed as the 62-year-old took on younger golfers yet he blew them out of the greens with the lowest gross score of 2-over 74. He racked up two birdies, 11 pars, and three bogeys for a 38 in the front nine. In the back nine, he had a birdie in hole No. 12 and seven pars in holes No. 10 and 11 and No. 13, 14, 15, 16 17, which led to his score of 36.

Second place went to Ned Norita with a gross score of 4-over 76, and third place was Ben Jones Jr. with a gross score of 5-over 77.

Sasamoto, son of Jose A. Sasamoto, known as the father of golf on Saipan, was ecstatic with his win. In an interview after the tournament's banquet, he said the first-place win was "special… It's an honor to win this tournament. It's my first one with Joeten because I just got back in 2021 and I wanted to win it because Dung [Tenorio] and his dad are special people to me."

He added that it felt good to win after he set a goal this year to win the tournament.

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